# MANAGING CONFLICT AT THE INTERPERSONAL LEVEL : A STUDY OF SOME ANTECEDENTS
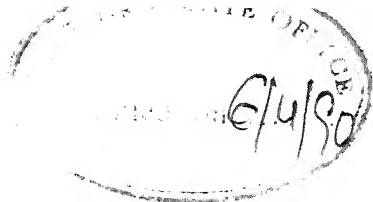
*A Thesis Submitted*
*in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements*
*for the Degree of*

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

*by*
UMA LAKHTAKIA

*to the*
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**
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**APRIL 1990**

# CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the work contained in the thesis entitled, "Managing Conflict at the Interpersonal Level: A Study of Some Antecedents" by Uma Lakhtakia, has been carried out under my supervision and that the work has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree.

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# SYNOPSIS

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Conflict is an important concept in modern management.  Two recommended levels of managing conflict are: structural and behavioral.  This study concerns itself with the behavioral aspect and aimed at understanding the underlying dynamics of styles of handling interpersonal conflict in organization.

The main objectives of the study were: (i) To identify the styles of handling interpersonal conflict; (ii) to examine the direct and interactive effects of predictors—personal attributes (needs for achievement, independence, and power), percieved organizational climate (achievement, independence, and power), targets' perceived bases of power (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert, informational, and connection), extent of influence, degree of conflict, and causes of conflict (clashes of values, beliefs, and interests; scarcity of resources; power incongruence; role expectations, and role ambiguity), and respondents' background characteristics and organizational characteristics—on the use of conflict handling styles. Altogether 225 male executives (from lower and middle levels) representing six heterogeneous manufacturing concerns voluntarily

responded to a questionnaire measuring the proposed variables.

Five conflict handling styles (integrating, avoiding, compromising, obliging, and dominating) were extracted through a varimax rotated factor analysis. The preliminary analysis indicated that integrating and dominating, respectively, were the most and the least popular styles for handling conflict with both immediate subordinates and superior.

The relationships of personal attributes, climate, bases of power, and causes of conflict with handling styles were apparent. Need, for power, achievement, and independence predicted the use of dominating, integrating, and obliging styles, respectively, in both the contexts. But, power and achievement orientation, predicted the use of obliging and dominating styles with subordinates. Achievement determined the avoiding and compromising styles with superior; and independence predicted the use of integrating style with subordinates and dominating style with superior.

Power and independence climates predicted the use of avoiding and integrating styles in the two contexts. In contrast, achievement and independence climates determined the use of integrating, avoiding, and dominating styles only in the superior context.

Information, connection, and personal bases of power (expert and referent) predicted the use of integrating, dominating, and obliging styles with subordinates, whereas organizational (reward, coercion, and legitimate), connection, and personal power contributed to avoiding, integrating, and obliging styles

with superior.

Causes of conflict were also found to be associated with conflict handling styles. Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests and power incongruence predicted the use of integrating, obliging and avoiding styles with subordinates, and obliging and dominating styles with superior. Role ambiguity contributed to the use of avoiding style with superior and dominating style with subordinates.

The study received only partial support to the match hypothesis that the use of handling styles is a function of the match between the characteristics of the agent and those of the organization. It was only the independence pair (person-climate) predicted the use of obliging style in both contexts. Other significant interactions were found for non-matched pairs or matched pair with different categorizations (low-high or high-low).

Bases of power interacted with needs in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. Achievement interacted with connection power in predicting the use of obliging style in both contexts. Other interactions specifically predicted the use of a particular style either with subordinates or superior. Independence interacted with degree of conflict in predicting the use of integrating and avoiding styles with subordinates, whereas power and achievement predicted the use of integrating, avoiding, and compromising styles with superior. Need for power and independence interacted with the extent of influence in predicting the avoiding style with subordinates and obliging

style with superior.

Needs-causes of conflict interactions explained a significant amount of variance in the use of all styles with superior and only integrating and obliging styles with subordinates. Except for integrating, all the other handling styles were affected by climate-bases of power interactions with superior. These interactions predicted the use of only dominating style with subordinates. The interactions of climate with degree and causes of conflict and extent of influence also influenced the use of handling styles. Organizational and personal bases of power interacted with degree of conflict in predicting the use of compromising and obliging styles with subordinates, whereas information power interacted with degree of conflict in predicting the use of integrating, avoiding, and dominating styles with superior. Bases of power-extent of influence interactions contributed to the use of integrating, compromising, and dominating styles in the superior context only. Causes-bases of power interactions predicted the use of all styles except obliging in the subordinate context. Causes-degree of conflict interactions predicted the use of compromising and dominating styles only with the subordinates. Interactions between causes of conflict and the extent of influence predicted the use of all but the obliging style with subordinates and compromising style with superior.

Finally, demographic and organizational characteristics were also found to explain some amount of variance in the use of handling styles.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

April, 1990                                     Uma Lakhtakia

TO

MY MOTHER

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Chapter 4    DISCUSSION

**Chapter 5       SUMMING UP**

# PREFACE

Conflict is an important and integral part of modern management. The complex influences and experiences that contribute to conflict behavior in organizations have become a topic of lively debate among researchers. Thus, understanding of theory and practice of conflict management has gained increasing importance in recent years. What is lacking today is an understanding of the factors which facilitate or hinder the synergic use of conflict. A proper understanding of these factors is essential for the achievement of organizational effectiveness. Conflict is no more regarded as an enigma to be eradicated from the organization. Despite its pervasiveness and importance, conflict research in the field of organizational behavior still has a fragmented character (Kabanoff, 1989).

Current studies on conflict suggest that "conflict should be encouraged, tolerated, and creatively channelled into effective problem solving" (Lippitt, 1982, p. 67). This requires an understanding of the structural factors which facilitate the rise of conflicts along with a knowledge of conflict handling styles and the situations in which they may be appropriately used.

The management of conflict is one of the most vital jobs of a manager. It is a classical and fundamental concept in the social sciences since it provides an understanding of social relationships.

The fundamental aim of the present study was to investigate

the styles of handling conflict of managers in Indian organizations. Specifically, the study aimed at examining some of the determinants of conflict handling styles at the interpersonal level. To attain this objective, the conflict handling styles of managers were examined at two levels of organizational hierarchy. These styles were examined in relation to the causes of conflict, degree of conflict, extent of influence, and bases of power. In addition, some situational and personal-demographic variables were taken into consideration. Whereas situational variables referred to the climate of the organization and organizational characteristics, personal variables referred to the characteristics of the respondents. An attempt was made to see the interactive effects of personal and situational variables on the choice of conflict handling styles.

The thesis has been organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the concept of "conflict" as understood by various scholars along with a review of its literature. It covers the major approaches to and aspects of organizational conflict. A comparative analysis of conflict and related concepts is given. The structure and process models of conflict managment are broadly discussed. The main focus has been on the styles of handling interpersonal conflict. Studies on the correlates of conflict handling styles are mentioned. Finally, the chapter outlines the main objectives and hypotheses of the present study.

Chapter 2 describes the methodology, tools, and procedures employed within the present research. The sample is described along with a description of the research site.

Chapter 3 describes the results of this study in terms of the direct and interactive relationships of various predictors on conflict handling styles. The results are presented separately for the two targets: conflict handling styles with immediate superior and conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates.

Chapter 4 is an attempt at integrating the findings of conflict handling styles with both immediate subordinates and superior.

Chapter 5 deals with a summary of the main findings, potential limitations of the survey, implications of the findings, and directions for future research.

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April, 1990                                          Uma Lakhtakia

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ach   =   Achievement

AVO   =   Avoiding

BF    =   Bases of Power

C1    =   Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests

C2    =   Scarcity of resources

C3    =   Power incongruence

C4    =   Role expectations

C5    =   Role ambiguity

CA    =   Achievement oriented climate

CC    =   Causes of conflict

CI    =   Independence oriented climate

CL    =   Climate

CO    =   Connection Power

COM   =   Compromising

CP    =   Power oriented climate

DC    =   Degree of conflict

DOM   =   Dominating

EI    =   Extent of influence

HI    =   High

IN    =   Information power

Ind   =   Independence

INT   =   Integrating

LO    =   Low

OBL   =   Obliging

OR    =    Organizational power

PA    =    Personal achievement

PC    =    Personal characteristics

PD    =    Personal data

PE    =    Personal power

PI    =    Personal independence

POW   =    Power

PP    =    Personal power

SR    =    Seniority

SS    =    Success

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### The Concept and Review of Literature

Conflict is perhaps humankinds' most fascinating and intriguing but misunderstood social phenomenon, the consequences of which are experienced in every aspect of life. Like any potent force, it generates great ambivalence by virtue of its ability to do great good or great injury (Thomas, 1976). The importance of conflict cannot be denied, since it is an inevitable part of any kind of interaction. Conflict is often used as a blanket term to encompass all types of oppositions and contradictions between various elements present in the personality of individuals and between social groups. It is not an objective tangible phenomenon; it exists in the minds of the people who are party to it (Greenhalgh, 1986).

### The Background

The concept of "conflict" is not new. Various phenomena relating to conflict have been studied by philosophers, sociologists, economists, political scientists, anthropologists, and psychologists. Managers have recently shown an interest in the study of conflict. Until recently, scholars have been predominantly aware of the destructive capabilities of conflicts characterized by strikes, lockouts, wars, hostility, etc. This awareness gave conflict an overwhelming connotation of danger, destructiveness, and evilness, and blinded people from the positive consequences of conflict. The ever increasing

acceptance of the functionality and inevitability of conflict reflects the growing understanding of conflict management. The interest in the study of conflict can be traced back to classical philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, and Locke. The philosophers stressed the need for order and complete elimination of conflict. It was presumed that disruption of this order would lead to social chaos. The nineteenth century observed a significant transformation of views following Darwin's doctrine of the "survival of the fittest." The philosophies of Marx, Engel, and Spence focused on conflict as an important social concept. "A certain amount of discord, inner divergence and outer controversy is organically tied up with the very elements that ultimately hold the group together; it cannot be seperated from the unity of the sociological structure" (Simmel, 1955, pp. 17-18). The pioneer of the human relations movement, Mayo (1933) emphasized upon the personal and organizational costs of conflict, implying that conflict was to be eliminated (Baritz, 1960; Kelly, 1970; Litterer, 1966). However, now-a-days, a balanced view of conflict is emerging in the literature. As Thomas (1976) puts it: "conflict is not an evil in itself, but rather a phenomenon which can have constructive or destructive effects depending upon its management" (p. 889). This view has been supported by several other researchers (e.g., Assael, 1969; Coser, 1956; Deutsch, 1969; Rahim, 1986).

## Definition of Conflict

The term "conflict" lacks a single, clear referent in the behavioral sciences. Much of this confusion and conceptual

disarray is due to the interest showered by scholars from different disciplines. Systematic reviews of the conflict literature by Fink (1968), Tedeschi, Schlenker, and Bonoma (1973), and Thomas (1976) show little conceptual agreement of any generally acceptable definition of conflict (Rahim, 1986). For decades, researchers have sought to accomplish a conclusive definition of conflict and a conceptualization of its development. For example, Fink (1968) mentions fourteen different criteria just for differentiating conflict from competition. He comments: "... the existing diversity of empirical and theoretical approaches to the study of social conflict has produced a state of terminological confusion, which impedes both comparisons between distinct classes of conflict phenomenon and the process of theoretical integration" (p. 416).

Pondy (1967) has found a number of divergent definitions ranging over objective conditions, emotions, perceptions, and behavior. Most researchers have taken a normative approach and emphasized more on value-laden terminology, whereas a definition should be free of value perspective. Following this line of thought, some authors have defined conflict as breaches in normally accepted behavior and as threat to cooperation (Mareck, 1966), as opposition process in any form (Walton, 1969), as antagonistic struggle (Coser, 1956), and so on. Following a behavioral perspective, others have defined conflict as the conditions of objective incompatibility of values and goals (Bernard, 1951), as behavior interfering with goal achievement (Schmidt & Kochan, 1972), as personal styles (Blake & Mouton,

1964), as reactions to threat (Deutsch & Krauss, 1962), or as cognitive distortions (Osgood, 1961). These definitions focus on a specific source or antecedent condition of conflict. Because conflict is perceived in such diverse ways, it is important to define it operationally. There are numerous definitions of conflict, but Coser (1956) captures the essence when he defines conflict as "a struggle of values or claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals" (p. 8). The definition by Steele (1976) adds clarity: "conflict may be defined as a condition involving at least two parties, who have a mutual problem of position or resource scarcity, in which there is a behavior (or threat) designed through the exercise of power to control or gain at the others' expense. In this process of conflict the established patterns of behavior are disrupted" (p. 221). These definitions could be expanded, but increased understanding can probably be accomplished more effectively by defining competition and hostility and comparing them to conflict.

Boulding (1962) considers conflict as a subset of competition which is due to mutual incompatibility of any potential positions of two behavior units. Conflict is considered to be a situation of competition. All incompatible situations lead to competition but conflict occurs when this incompatibility becomes obvious to the parties. In a competitive situation, the success of one party implies the failure of the

other, but it differs from conflict in the sense that each party is obligated to abide by certain rules and regulations. Contrary to Boulding, others argue that competition is a subset of conflict which may be placed along a cooperative-competitive continuum (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970; Rapoport, 1960; Thaibaut & Kelley, 1959). In the game theory, it is possible to delineate three points along this continuum (positive-sum, zero-sum, and mixed-motive) to facilitate the categorization of conflict (Schelling, 1960). Hostility, on the other hand, can be a hostile or antagonistic state, condition, or attitude and need not involve any specific behavior.

## Organizational Conflict

Having defined conflict in a general sense, one can move to the specific case of organizational conflict. Any social situation that leads to interaction (direct or indirect) lays the ground for conflict. An organization is a social entity which plants the seeds of conflict by providing different statuses to people along the vertical dimension. Rahim (1981), in a content analysis of syllabi on organizational behavior courses, indicated that conflict was the fifth most frequently mentioned among sixty five topics. Robbins (1974) observed that "no current investigation of how organizations operate is complete without an understanding of the significance of conflict and the techniques of its management" (p. xiii). Pondy (1969) articulated that organization theories that do not admit conflict lead to inefficient problem solving in organizations. Conflict within and between organizations is intimately related as either

symptom, cause, or effect to organizational problems.

Organization theorists have taken different perspectives while defining conflict in organizations. While some have defined conflict as a type of behavior (e.g., Litterer, 1966), others have considered it a situation (e.g., Smith, 1966). March and Simon (1958) define conflict as a breakdown in the standard mechanism of decision-making, so that a group or individual experiences difficulty in selecting an alternative. This definition highlights only one aspect of an organization and is thus a narrow conceptualization. On the broader side, Pondy (1967) defines conflict as a dynamic process underlying behavior. Taking a middle position, Tedeschi et al. (1973) view conflict "as an interactive state in which the behaviors or goals of one actor are to some degree incompatible with the behaviors or goals of some other actor or actors" (p. 232). Schmidt and Kochan (1972) argue that the potential for conflict increases with goal incompatibility, perceived opportunity for interference, and interdependent activities among organizational subunits. Going by these definitions, it may be concluded that conflict is an "interactive state", the behavioral manifestations of which take the form of tension, frustration, abuse, and strikes and lockouts in organizations.

In a manner similar to the definitions of conflict, researchers have taken different perspectives while classifying conflict into various categories. Conflict has been classified on the basis of expression--that is, manifest and latent conflict (Deutsch, 1969; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970)--and on the basis of

behavioral orientation--that is, approach-approach, approach-avoidant, and avoidant-avoidant (Lewin, 1948). Based upon the issue underlying conflict, Deutsch (1973) categorized six types of conflict: veradical, contingent, displaced, misattributed, latent, and false conflict. The conflicts that are generally experienced range from the micro most level to the macro most level. These levels may be further classified as intrapersonal, intragroup, interpersonal, intergroup, sociopolitical, and international conflict (Pareek, 1982). The first four levels are specific to an organization.

## Effects of Conflict

Having recognized the futility of trying to eliminate conflict, it seems appropriate to look at what the consequences of conflict may be. According to Thomas (1976), "recognition of the useful consequences of conflict does not imply that conflict is intrinsically good or bad. What seems to be emerging is a balanced view which recognizes cost and benefit, danger and promise" (p. 892). Theories are shifting from the notion of tension reduction to tension maintenance; that is, organisms tend to maintain optimal levels of stimulation (Allport, 1953; Driver & Streufert, 1964; Hunt, 1963). Conflict stimulates interest and curiosity and is a process of testing and assessing oneself (Deutsch, 1971).

Divergent views often produce ideas of superior quality. High performers have been found to discuss their work with colleagues of different orientations (Pelz, 1956). Conflict is a

necessary pre-requisite for creativity in the context of decision-making (Hall, 1971). Aggressive behavior in conflict is not necessarily destructive. Rappoport (1966) has proposed two models of international conflict. The first focuses upon nonrational forces, whereas the second model focuses upon conflict as instrumental goal oriented behavior of two rational parties. In view of this model, Litterer (1966) and March and Simon (1958) state that conflict initiates a search for ways of reducing it. Two parties trying to improve their conditions may find new ways to benefit both (Follett, 1941). Following this perspective, the suppression of conflict may inhibit progress (Van Doorn, 1966). Apart from these consequences, conflict within an organization may lead to systemic changes (Litterer, 1966), and hostility between groups may foster internal stability (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Coser, 1956).

### Approaches to the Study of Organizational Conflict

With the growing acceptance that conflict is inevitable and functional for the organization, efforts are being directed towards the management of conflict. The psychological literature on conflict in organizational settings has been growing rapidly. A review of this literature reveals three approaches to the study of organizational conflict.

### Classical Approach

This approach to organization and management dominated the field during the first half of this century. Implicitly assuming that conflict was detrimental or dysfunctional to organization,

the classical organization theorists (e.g., Fayol, 1949; Taylor, 1911; Weber, 1947) emphasized the need to minimize conflict. In essence, Taylor (1911) attempted to reduce conflict by altering the technical systems, although there was no provision for the effective management of conflict between individuals or groups. Taking a closed systems perspective, Fayol (1949) emphasized the need for mechanistic organizational structures. Advocating bureaucracy as the ideal form of organization, Weber (1947) left no place for deviance. Follet (1940) was perhaps the only significant exception among the classical theorists who acknowledged the constructive value of conflict: "we can often measure our progress by watching the nature of conflicts ... we become spiritually more and more developed as our conflicts rise to higher levels" (p. 35). Among the neo-classicists, Mayo (1933) emphasized the need for elimination or minimization of conflict for increasing organizational effectiveness. He attempted to reduce conflict by altering the social system.

## Behavioristic Approach

The behavioristic approach dominated the conflict literature from the late 1940's through the mid 1950's. The behaviorists argued that conflict was a natural occurrence in all groups and organizations. They recognized the inevitability of conflicts in organizations, rationalized its existence, and occasionally advocated means to enhance conflict to achieve organizational effectiveness. Though they accepted the presence of conflict, they did not create the conditions that generate conflicts in

organizations.

## Interactionist Approach

While the behaviorists accepted conflict as a natural phenomenon, the interactionists explained conflict on the ground that "tension is normal, even desirable with the thought growing that healthy personalities actually seek to increase tension" (Litterer, 1966, pp. 178-179). They not only accepted the absolute necessity of conflict but also defined conflict management to include stimulation as well as resolution methods. They considered conflict management a major responsibility of managers (Robbins, 1974).

Much of this ambivalence toward conflict in the field of organizational behavior comes from two contrasting themes. Viewed from the perspective of the first theme, organizational conflict may be interpreted as the mutual interference of various parts of the organization--as a breakdown in the coordination of parts which interfere with the machines efficiency (March & Simon, 1958; Thomas, 1976). Viewed from the perspective of the second theme, organizational conflicts play an important role in organizational innovation and adaptation. Thus, conflict can be interpreted as a critical questioning of prevailing ideas, procedures, etc. (Thomas, 1976). As stated earlier, conflict effectively managed is a necessary precondition for creativity (Hall, 1971). Lack of open disagreement in a group may lead to poor decision-making--a phenomenon called "group-think." Rahim (1986) opines that the future of organizations has been

distributed to too much harmony and that conflict within top management is essential for organizational survival, adaptation, and change.

If conflict is important to the organization, it is equally important to the managers. Recent studies have indicated both the frequency and the importance of conflict management. Conflict management skills have become more important in the past ten years. Organizational theorists have begun to stress the function of conflict as a vital seed from which various organizational processes branch out. The centrality of conflict and the complexity associated with its management is revealed by these processes. It, therefore, becomes essential that managers and organizational designers understand the context in which conflict occurs and the techniques of its management (Miles, 1980).

## Classification of Organizational Conflict

Conflict is now viewed as a necessary and positive indicator of organizational effectiveness. It is widely accepted that conflict can be harnessed effectively to have a constructive impact on the organization. A review of the organizational behavior literature indicates different types of conflict. One typology distinguishes conflict on the basis of the sources or antecedent conditions, that is, cognitive conflict, affective conflict, goal conflict, substantive conflict, and conflict of values and interests (Cosier & Rose, 1977; Druckman & Zechmeister, 1973; Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954). Another typology

differentiates organizational conflict on the basis of the levels at which it occurs. These levels may be described as follows.

## Intrapersonal

It "is a situation in which a person is motivated to engage in two or more mutually exclusive activities" (Murray, 1968, p. 220). This type of conflict is also known as intraindividual conflict. It occurs when a person is required to do certain tasks which do not match his or her interest, skills, etc. Role conflict and role ambiguity fall under this heading.

## Interpersonal

This refers to the conflict that exists between two or more organizational members of the same or different hierarchical levels. It is also a subclass of intergroup conflict and may occur at two levels: individual vs individual and individual vs group.

## Intragroup

This refers to the disagreements or incongruencies that exist among the subgroup members of a group.

## Intergroup

This refers to the conflict that exists between two or more units or groups within an organization. Line vs staff conflict falls into this category.

### Conflict Management

Having recognized that some amount of conflict is an integral part of organizations, emphasis has shifted from the "resolution" of conflict to the "management" of conflict, the

difference being more than semantic (Boulding, 1968; Robbins, 1978). The management of conflict implies maintaining an optimal level of conflict to ensure productivity and change. The relationship between conflict and organizational effectiveness approximates an inverted U-function (Lusch, 1976; Pearson & Monoky, 1976; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Reve & Stern, 1979; Scott, 1966). Organizations stagnate with no conflict and uncontrolled conflict may have dysfunctional consequences (Hampton, Summer, & Webber, 1973). The positive consequences of conflict have been noted by a number of scholars (Assael, 1969; Blake, Shepard, & Mouton, 1964; Brown, 1983; DuBrin, 1972; Evan, 1965; Janis, 1971; Kilmann & Thomas, 1978; Likert & Likert, 1976; Pelz, 1967; Thomas, 1976). It has empirically been found that small groups are more productive when dissenters are present than when there is no difference of opinion (Cartwright & Zander, 1968). In an experimental study, Schwenk and Thomas (1983) found that managers who received conflicting analyses came up with higher expected profit than those who received single analysis. In a review of numerous studies, Tjosvold and Johnson (1983) indicated that conflict in organizations can be productive if it is handled constructively. In a study of managers, Thomas and Schmidt (1976) found that respondents spent 20% of their time dealing with conflict. Conflict management was rated as equal to or slightly higher in importance than planning, motivation, communication, and decision-making. To capitalize upon the positive outcomes of conflict, an understanding of conflict in

organizations and ways to manage it becomes essential. This view has recently been supported by Lippitt (1982) and Shockley and Morley (1984).

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it is presumed that a moderate amount of conflict may provide activation and stimulation in order to epitomize job performance or to enhance adaptive or innovative capacities of organizational members. Following this view, Brown (1983) has suggested that conflict management may require intervention to promote or reduce conflict. Argyris (1976) and Argyris and Schon (1978) are of the view that intervention for managing conflict should promote double-loop rather than single-loop learning. Whereas the former requires changes in the underlying policies, assumptions, and goals, the latter does not emphasize on these changes.

**Approaches and Models**

Studies on the management of conflict have taken two directions. Some researchers (Corwin, 1969; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, 1970; Walton, Dutton, & Cafferty, 1969) have attempted to measure the amount of conflict at various organizational levels and to explore their sources. It is assumed that alteration of these sources will help maintain a moderate amount of conflict. Other researchers (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Follett, 1940; Hall, 1969; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas, 1976) have attempted to relate the various styles of handling conflict to the quality of solution.

Conflict management derives mainly from organizational development and partly from bargaining theory and laboratory gaming. In addition to its applied aspect, conflict management has two other distinguishing characteristics. First, it represents a reaction against over-emphasis on the negative aspect of conflict. Second, conflict management is a contingency approach concerned with the whole range of conflicts and negotiations, not just with conflict within hierarchical organizations (Strauss, 1978). Bargaining theory contributes to conflict management by calling attention to critical variables neglected by scholars. The theory has two main sources: game theory and the economic theory of bilateral monopoly. Laboratory gaming represents the psychological, as opposed to the economic, approach to bargaining. Gaming research involves small group experiments directed toward a general theory of bargaining behavior that might be appropriate in various situations. In contrast to these two branches of conflict management, organizational development has a blend of applied orientations. Managers have become increasingly interested in structural as opposed to attitudinal changes.

For the study and management of conflicts, researchers have focused either upon the dynamics underlying conflict or upon the structural factors that precipitate conflicts. Any system depends upon its internal mechanism and structure to maintain itself. For example, any living organism functions on the basis of its physiology and anatomy which corresponds to the process

and structural models that have been proposed and used for the study of conflict and its management.

**Process Models**. These Models are mainly directed toward the cyclical and dynamic courses of conflict where one event follows another. The objective of such models has been to identify the events within an episode and to trace the effect of each event upon the succeeding one. Viewed from this perspective, conflict emerges as an ongoing phenomenon. Pondy (1967) and Walton (1969) observe that conflict in a dyadic relationship tends to occur in cycles. In Pondy's terminology, a given conflict forms an episode which is partially shaped by the previous one and which lays the ground for future episodes. The conflict process is not sustained indefinitely. It begins with some reason and has an observable duration. Pondy (1967) considers conflict a dynamic process underlying organizational behavior. He identifies three models which provide some insight into the dynamics of a conflict episode: (i) the bargaining model is designed to deal with conflict among interest groups in competition for scarce resources; (ii) the systems model is directed toward lateral conflict or conflict among the parties to a functional relationship; and (iii) the bureaucratic model is designed for analyzing conflicts along the vertical dimension of a hierarchy. This is known as the authority-relation among parties. This relation is defined as a set of subordinate activities over which a superior has the legitimacy to exercise discretion.

Following the line set by Pondy (1967), Walton (1969) has proposed a cyclical model of interpersonal conflict. This model identifies four basic components in an interpersonal situation, that is, the conflict issue or problem, the circumstances that precipitate manifested conflict, the behavior, and the consequences.

According to Thomas (1976), the process model comprises five main events within an episode from the viewpoint of one of the parties: frustration, conceptualization, behavior, others' reaction, and outcome. An episode is produced by the party's experiencing frustration which results in the conceptualization of the situation. Behavior is based upon conceptualization and is used in a general term. Reaction of the other party results in interaction, the termination of which is an outcome.

**Structural Models**. Another group of researchers attempts to understand conflict phenomena by studying how underlying conditions shape events. Models proposed to study these parameters may be clustered under the rubric of structural models. In contrast to the process model, the structural model is relatively unconcerned with specific conflict episode. This model throws light on the central behavioral tendencies within a given relationship. Walton and Dutton (1969) have proposed a general model of interdepartmental conflict and its management. Their model integrates the contextual determinants of organizational conflict and the dynamics of conflictful relationship. The general feedback linkage in the model is

provided by the adaptive and maladaptive reactions of higher executives to conflict and the consequences of conflict among units. The model describes mutual dependence, asymmetries, rewards, organization differentiation, role dissatisfaction, ambiguities, common resources, communication obstacles, and personal skills and traits as major types of antecedents. Each of these several aspects of the model has implications for a strategy of modifying interdepartmental patterns.

The Thomas (1976) model of conflict management advocates the importance of determining the contextual variables in conflict. Each party's behavior is viewed as the result of some pressure and constraint, and behavioral change is seen as the consequence of change in the configuration of these variables. The conflict behavior is seen as shaped by four structural variables: (i) both parties are seen as having behavioral predispositions, (ii) both parties experience pressure from their social milieu, (iii) response is the result of conflict incentives in the situation, and (iv) interaction occurs in a framework of rules and regulations which constrain their behavior.

Based upon the Thomas model is Katz and Kahn's (1978) conceptualization of a structural model of conflict. This model is partly shaped by the systems approach to organizations. The model categorizes six sets of variables and their relationships. These variables are: organizational properties, conflict of interest, role expectations, personality predispositions, external norms, rules and regulations, and interactions. A

change approach to conflict management can focus upon any of the six variables as its immediate target. In fact, the literature of conflict management has not yet developed in these terms and the programs to manage conflict tend to have multiple targets and unspecified assumptions.

Recently, Prein (1984) has proposed a contingency model of conflict assuming that there is no one best way of intervening in all types of conflicts and that the intervention strategy adopted should depend upon the type of conflict and the context of its origin. The effectiveness of different third party strategy should depend upon these two factors. The basic assumption underlying this model is that the strategy chosen should be in accordance with the problem or conflict. But conflicts are not given: conflicts are complex and dynamic processes where it is difficult to specify the exact context. Prein (1984) distinguishes three strategies--mediation, confrontation, and procedural.

Derr (1978) also advocates in favor of a contingency approach to conflict management. He suggests three main strategies of conflict resolution: power play, bargaining, and collaboration. Collaboration is effective in situations of damaged relationship of mutually interested parties. Bargaining is effective in establishing power parity, distributing scarce resources, etc. Finally, power play is seen as the only feasible way to resolve ideological disputes and to cope with conflicts for the autonomous.

A **Synthesis** **of** **Process** **and** **Structural** **Models**. Having
identified and differentiated the process and structural models,
it is important to take into consideration their
interrelationship. The structural models help in suggesting
systemic changes, whereas the process models help in
managing an ongoing system. The process models help to cope with
crisis, whereas the structural models help long run improvement
in relationships (Thomas, 1976). The two models complement each
other and the tactics which they suggest are necessary for the
effective management of conflict, since they throw light upon the
behavioral and structural factors in a conflict situation. One
question that naturally arises is whether knowledge gained in one
of these areas is useful in another. The comparability of
conflict settings provides an answer to this question. Beres and
Schmidt (1982) derived a contingency description of conflict from
a comparative analysis of several clusters of research specific
to settings and identified conflict management implications.
These settings were: social, international, U.S. industrial, and
organizational relations. They identified variance in five
elements of conflict--parties, stages of discord, causes, social
context, and values. The first two elements form the process
contingencies that raise behavioral and decision-making issues.
The last three elements form the structural contingencies that
raise the issues of conflict resolution, environmental influence,
and interpersonal orientations. This unifying framework
contributes to the development of a general theory of conflict

management, since it associates conflict management issue with specific conflict contingencies.

Whereas process models neglect the causes of conflict, structural models neglect the dynamics and consequences of conflict. A disadvantage of both the models is their lack of systematic concern for the central mechanisms of prevention and escalation.

Glasl's (1980) model of conflict escalation within organizations describes the basic psychological and sociological mechanisms that tend to foster continued escalation of a conflict till one or all parties involved collapse(s). The model differentiates different stages of escalation that are linked to many different strategies for handling conflict. Conflict escalation from one stage to another passes a specific threshold but which, once passed, prevents the de-escalation of conflict. For maximizing effectiveness, the intervention strategy should be based on the specific degree of the intensity of conflict.

Vliert (1984) blends the process and structural models of conflict into what is called the "prevention-escalation" model. This model puts the conflicting parties both in a sequence of events (process) and in a constellation of forces (structural). Highlighting the preventive or escalating nature of all kinds of spontaneous and strategic conflict management, the model assumes that the causes, the characteristics, and the consequences of conflict between individuals do not differ essentially from those of groups. The four characteristic phenomena underlying a

conflict are: (i) antecedent conditions, (ii) issue of the conflict, (iii) behavior which can be preventive or escalative and spontaneous or strategic, and (iv) consequences. Preventive behavior involves a range of behaviors that reduce conflict. The opposite of this behavior forms escalation behavior. This model simultaneously takes into account several intervening, independent, and dependent variables. Further research is required to enlighten the differences as to causes and effects between the three feedbacks on the antecedent conditions, issues, and behavior. This model may be used as a diagnostic tool providing questions of causes, issues, reactions, and consequences, and subsequently as a way of selecting certain preventive or escalative behaviors. This diagnosis may facilitate the third party's stage of intervention which may be either preventive or escalative. Combination of both choices results in a typology of eight strategies of conflict management.

Rahim and Bonoma (1979), in their model for managing organizational conflict, elaborate upon the notion of diagnosis and intervention. The identification or diagnosis of the problem of conflict must precede any intervention designed to manage conflict (Brown, 1979; Levinson, 1972). DuBrin (1972) emphasized the need for diagnosing intergroup conflict through formal and informal approaches. Proper diagnosis reveals the underlying causes of conflict which are quite distinct from what they appear to be on the surface. Wrong diagnosis may lead to an error of the third type. Mitroff and Featheringham (1974) define this

error as "the probability of having solved the wrong problem when one should have solved the right problem" (p. 383). Diagnosis involves measurement of conflict, its sources, effectiveness, and the analysis of relationship among them. Essentially, it indicates the need and type of intervention required. Intervention consists of two approaches: behavioral and structural. The behavioral approach attempts to enhance organizational effectiveness by changing the attitudes, values, beliefs, etc. of individual members. This approach is designed to enable members to learn the use of various styles of handling conflict and the situations where they are appropriate (a detailed account of this approach will be made in the next section).

The structural approach attempts to enhance organizational effectiveness by changing the organizational structure. This approach attempts to manage conflict by altering the amount of conflict. Earlier researchers have shown that organizations should be designed on the basis of the nature of task or technology (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Perrow, 1967; Rice, 1963; Woodward, 1965) and the motivational tendencies of members (Morse & Lorsch, 1970).

A somewhat different approach to conflict management has been provided by Likert and Likert (1976). Research on conflict resolution has emphasized the phenomena of interaction at group and individual levels, but there is little evidence regarding what formal properties of organizations are associated with

successful management. Likert and Likert view conflict management as one of the derivative advantages of participative organizational structure (System IV). The supportive interpersonal style and the structure of overlapping groups that are the main focus of system IV organization are also the basis of superior conflict management. The satisfaction of all the parties involved is the chief criterion of conflict resolution. Integrative goals, de-emphasis of status, and the use of consensus have been proposed as the basis of resolution. Structural changes must be initiated to the extent that the relevent groups are not already connected by means of overlapping vertical or lateral membership. Measurement and feedback along with third party consultation has been proposed as a way to structural and interpersonal changes.

An overall observation of the foregoing discussion seems to suggest that different models have identified different factors and conditions which shape conflict. Taken together, the process and structural models throw light on the following elements: antecedent conditions, issue, interaction, behavior, and consequences. Other variables falling into this category are frustration, rules and regulations, norms, behavioral predispositions, incentive structure, etc. (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Thomas, 1976). Collectively, the literature identifies three distinctive types of causes: (i) conditions that give rise to incompatible differences, (ii) aggressive dispositions (Coser, 1956), and (iii) psychological processes that cause awareness of

incompatible differences (Thomas, 1976; Rapoport, 1960).

A survey by Boekestijn (1979) indicates that the explanations of conflict behavior can be sought into individual differences. It is presumed that a relationship exists between education and aggression, frustration and aggression, categorization and conflict, perception and conflict, etc. Blake and Mouton (1962) warn against the "psychodynamic fallacy" of unjustifiably ascribing conflicts to individuals. Focus has been more on the influence of personality traits and attitudes than on the biological basis of conflicts. Using the experimental game, it has been found that a combative attitude increases with the need for power, dogmatism, Machiavellianism, and inferiority (Deutsch, 1971; Krivohlavy, 1974; Terhune, 1970).

The potential for conflict is inherent in the phenomenon of organization: "every aspect of organizational life that creates order and coordination of effort must overcome other tendencies to action, and in that fact lies the potentiality for conflict" (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 617). Depending on the kind of conflict and the context in which it occurs, the same organizational characteristics are related to conflict in different ways (Corwin, 1969). Structural aspects such as hierarchical level, specialization and heterogeneity (Corwin, 1969), differentiation in the structure and time orientation (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967), joint resources and means, are potential causes of conflict. Role conflicts are found at managing, controlling, and innovative positions (Kahn et al., 1964; Miles & Perrault, 1976). Conflicts

also appear to be associated with cultural organization characteristics such as goals, values, and norms. Thomas (1976) differentiates decision, rules, negotiation procedures, mediation, and arbitration mechanisms which impose its restriction upon conflict management. Unfortunately, there is no research differentiating between the rules regulating the management of existing conflicts and the rules stimulating or preventing conflict. Characteristics of an organization or an individual will increase the chance of conflict only when it stands in relation to one another (Apfelbaum, 1974; Deutsch, 1973). Horowitz (1964) has found that hostility does not result from differences in influence, but from an influence ratio turning out more unfavorably than expected. Contrary to this, Raven and Kruglanski (1970) articulate that conflict is tempered by possibilities of positive sanctioning but intensified by possibilities of negative sanctioning. In addition, mutual dependence (Prein, 1979; Walton & Dutton, 1969), communication failure (Burton, 1969; March & Simon, 1958), and mutual prejudices are also important factors.

The next factor that seems to dominate the process and structural models is the party's conceptualization and definition of an issue. According to Thomas (1976), the conceptualization of a situation involves the definition of the issue, action alternative, and outcomes. Subjective reality is important in understanding and influencing conflict handling behavior. Defining an issue involves some assessment of the primary

concerns of two parties. Thomas explains this in terms of three dimensions: egocentricity, underlying concerns, and the size of the issue. Defining an issue solely in terms of one's own concern refers to egocentricity. Appreciation of underlying concerns increases the chances of a solution that satisfies the concerns of both parties (Deutsch, 1969; Follett, 1940; Walton, 1969). The notion of "size" of an issue was developed by Fisher (1964). Some researchers have focused upon the concrete issue of conflict. For example, scarcity of resources may result in the conflict of interest which may be material or social, such as money, power, etc. Disagreements regarding policies and procedures constitute conflict about the intention, planning, execution, coordination, results, and control of group activities (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pondy, 1967; Walton, 1969). Conflicts regarding role behaviors of individuals are concerned with what a member should or should not do under certain circumstances. These roles are divided on the basis of the position that a member holds.

A survey by Vliert (1974) reveals four kinds of role conflicts between two parties: (i) socio-emotional conflict where identity intervenes; (ii) frustration of identity occurs when others affect self-image, characteristics identifications, including values and sensibilities (Mastenbroek, 1979; Walton, 1972); (iii) unrealistic conflict is a result of accumulated tension (Coser, 1956); and (iv) cognitive conflicts of interest and disagreement turn into affective conflicts of identity

(Walton, 1969), a phenomenon also known as the personalizing of conflict (Filley, 1975; Pondy, 1967). On the other hand, rationalization may turn deeply rooted affective frustrations into manifest surface problems (Deutsch, 1969; Walton, 1969). Action alternatives and their outcomes formulate the second aspect of a party's definition of an issue. By "action alternative" is meant "the possible final actions of conflict episodes which represent dispositions of the conflict issue" (Thomas, 1976, p. 897). The joint outcome space has been introduced by Thomas (1976) as a format for representing the party's conceptualization of alternatives and their outcome. This format reveals five points representing different degree of satisfaction of party's concern and that of the other. It has been observed that a party's perception of interest is to some extent independent of the objective situation.

To sum up, though the way a party defines an issue has an important influence upon conflict behavior, the literature on issue is critical but often ignored. The antecedent conditions and issue of conflict are followed by the behavior of the parties. Thomas (1976) defines three components of behavior-- orientation, strategic objective, and tactics. One description of orientation considers a posture toward cooperation or competition and the other focuses on five commonly known orientations (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Hall, 1969; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas, 1976). Kelly and Stahelski (1970) have suggested that "there are two stable types of individuals which may be

described approximately as cooperative or competitive personalities" (p. 66). These orientations have also been defined as concern for results vs concern for people, as concern for personal goals vs concern for relationships, as concern for others vs concern for self, and as cooperativeness vs assertiveness (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Hall, 1969; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). A combination of these two orientations results in five styles of handling conflict (which receives a detailed treatment in the next section of this chapter).

The behavior of one party will have an impact on the behavior of the other party. This interaction is portrayed as strongly influenced by a number of psychological dynamics which are triggered by others' behavior. The orientation, strategic objective, and the tactics of one party may change as a reaction to the others' behavior. Thomas (1976) identifies several dynamics that may occur during interaction.

As interaction ceases, some consequence has occured for the parties. The conflict may be resolved or aggravated. The consequence may reduce or increase frustration, mistrust, hostility, etc. Thomas (1976) discusses consequences in terms of others' goal attainment, party's goal attainment, and the goal attainment of the organization which includes party and other.

In terms of organizational goal achievement, it has been found that organizational performance relates to inter-unit collaboration (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Vliert (1984) explains

consequences in terms of preventive-escalating behavior. The former may result in resolution both directly and through joint goals, or through more reciprocal empathy. Partial or complete removal of conflict is a direct consequence of altering the antecedent of organizational or relational characteristics. Along with this exists various indirect consequences, such as destroying healthy competition. Contrary to this, the latter (i.e., escalation) does not essentially lead to prevention by means of other variables. As mentioned earlier, moderate escalation is conducive to problem solving. Blake and Mouton (1964) and Sheriff (1966) have demonstrated that escalation of conflict between groups is accompanied by prevention of conflict within groups. Escalation behavior directly instigates the opposite party's defensive and escalative behavior. Members of an organization behave in a hostile manner if they perceive the other to be hostile (Renwick, 1975). This works as a self-fulfilling prophecy without being noticed (Kelly & Stahelski, 1970; Thomas & Pondy, 1977).

## Summary

Conflict need not necessarily be dysfunctional for organizations. A moderate amount of conflict may enhance organizational effectiveness. Researchers are now becoming aware of the potential benefits as well as the costs of interpersonal conflicts, and the contribution that effective conflict management can make to organizational performance (e.g., Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985; Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). In view

of this, a great deal of conflict research has focused upon behavior in conflict settings and understanding why people adopt more or less effective modes of conflict resolution or management. Various models have been propounded to explain the phenomenon of conflict and implications for its management. One line of thought emphasizes the management of conflict at the structural level. This implies changes in the structure of the organization: authority structure, span of control, resources, etc. The other line of thought emphasizes the underlying dynamics of conflict.

## Conflict Handling Styles

Management at the behavioral level implies teaching organizational members behavior patterns that are appropriate to a particular situation. These behavior patterns have been named the styles of handling conflict. Researchers have given different categorization of these styles and their dynamics.

Follett (1940) recommended three main ways of dealing with conflict: domination, compromise, and integration. Blake and Mouton (1964) were the first to present a systematic conceptual scheme for classifying the styles of handling interpersonal conflict. Originally proposed by them, the "conflict grid" identifies five kinds of conflict behavior: competing, (9, 1), collaborating (9, 9), compromising (5, 5), avoiding (1, 1), and accommodating (1, 9). Blake and Mouton interpret these behaviors in terms of two underlying cognitive/affective dimensions: concern for people (an attempt to satisfy the other persons'

concerns) and concern for production (an attempt to satisfy one's own concerns).

A number of studies have examined whether cognitive representations of these styles match the predictions of the conflict grid and whether style preference can be predicted from people's expressed levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness (Cosier & Ruble, 1981; Kabanoff, 1985; Ruble & Thomas, 1976; Van de Vliert & Hordijk, 1986). With one major exception, these studies have generally supported the conflict grid. In contrast to the grid description of compromising as an intermediate mode, it has been found that people describe compromise as highly cooperative, close to collaborating and accommodating, and also quite assertive, close to collaborating (Kabanoff, 1987).

Based upon the grid model, Hall (1969) proposed a two-dimensional model of conflict management. The styles of handling conflict were differentiated on the basis of two dimensions: concern for personal goals and concern for relationships. The styles are: 1,1 (low concern for both); 9,1 (high concern for personal goals and low concern for relationships); 1,9 (low concern for personal goals and high concern for relationships); 9,9 (high concern for both); and 5,5 (moderate concern for both).

The scheme originally proposed by Blake and Mouton (1964) was reinterpreted by Thomas (1976). The party's orientation is based on the degree to which he or she would like to satisfy his or her own concern and the degree to which he or she would like to satisfy the concern of others. The two dimensions correspond

to the dimensions of cooperativeness and assertiveness. A combination of these dimensions results in five styles of handling conflict: competitive, collaborative, avoidant, accommodative, and sharing. Although the names and conceptualizations seem to be somewhat different, this categorization stems directly from the work of Blake and Mouton (1964) and Hall (1969).

The five-category scheme presents more choices than a dichotomous differentiation of cooperativeness-uncooperativeness, which has extensively been used in experimental game approach. Thomas (1971), in a study of interdepartmental relations, found that cooperation varied negatively with competition and avoidance, and positively with collaboration and accommodation. Other studies have also generally supported the five-category typology for describing styles of behavior (e.g., Cosier & Ruble, 1981; Kabanoff, 1985; Ruble & Thomas, 1976).

Using a conceptualization similar to Blake and Mouton (1964), Hall (1969), and Thomas (1976), Rahim and Bonoma (1979) differentiated the styles of handling interpersonal conflict on two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. The first dimension refers to the degree to which a person attempts to satisfy his or her own concern. The second dimension refers to the degree to which a person attempts to satisfy the concern of others. A synthesis of two-dimensional conflict grid with five styles of handling interpersonal conflict is shown in Figure 1.1. These dimensions portray the
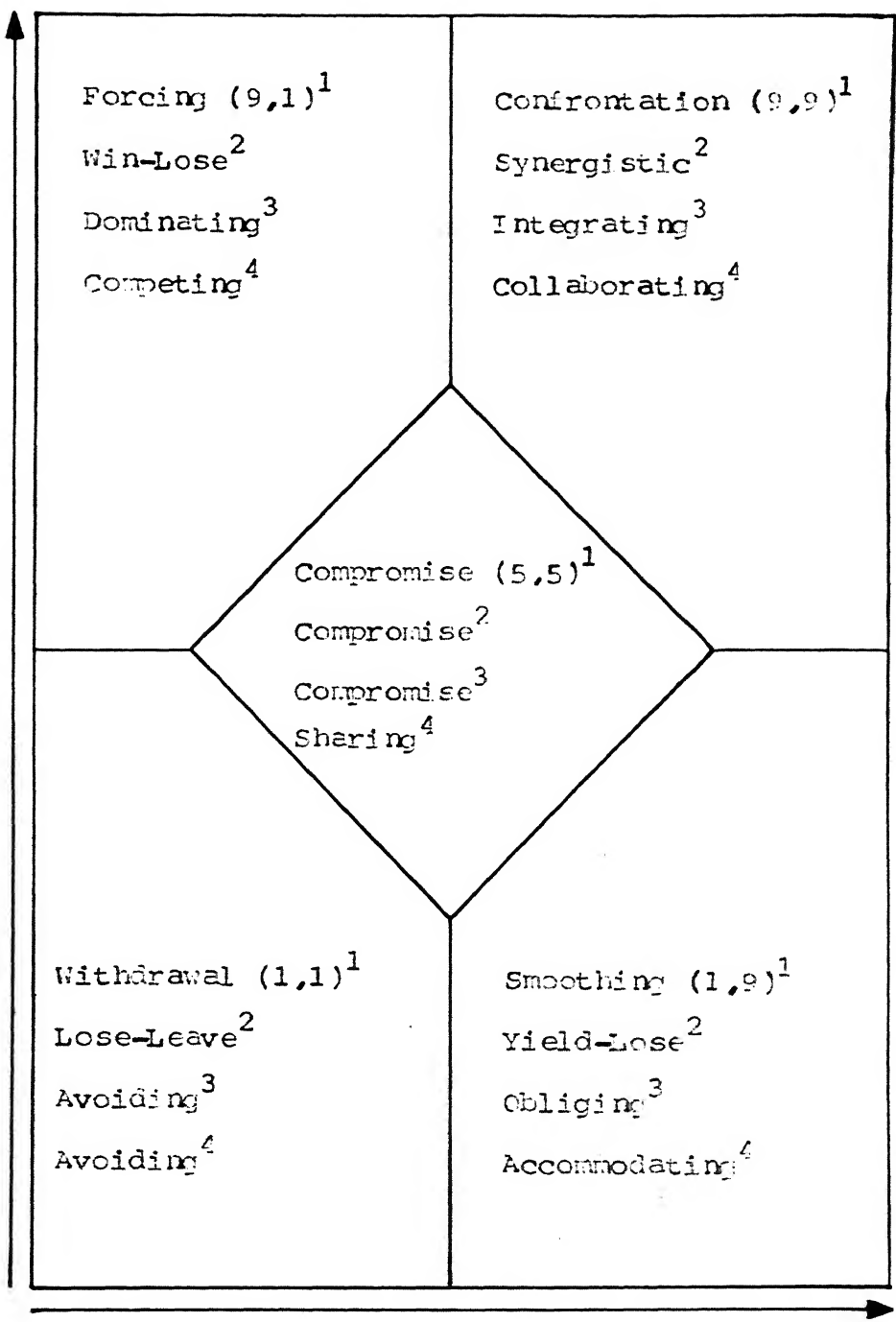
Figure 1.1. A synthesis of two-dimensional conflict grid with five styles of handling interpersonal conflict (1 = Blake & Mouton, 1964; 2 = Hall, 1969; 3 = Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; 4 = Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

motivational orientations of an individual during conflict (Rubin
& Brown, 1975). A study by Ruble and Thomas (1976) yielded
general support for these dimensions. A combination of the two
dimensions results in five specific styles of handling
interpersonal conflict. The styles are described below:

**INTEGRATING** (High concern for self and others). Behaviors
falling under the heading of integrating style are openness,
exchange of information, and examination of differences to reach
a solution. "The first rule for obtaining integration is to put
your cards on the table, face the real issue, uncover the
conflict, bring the whole thing into the open" (Follet, 1940, p.
38). Prein (1976) suggested that integrating consists of two
distinctive elements: confrontation and problem solving.
Confrontation involves open and direct communication which makes
way for problem solving.

**OBLIGING** (Low concern for self and high concern for others).
Attempts to play down differences, doing favors to others,
emphasis on commonalities to satisfy the concern of the other
party characterize the obliging style. This style contains an
element of self sacrifice. Such a person neglects his or her own
concern to satisfy the concern of the other party and is known as
a conflict absorber (Boulding, 1962).

**DOMINATING** (High concern for self and low concern for
others). This style has been identified with win-lose
orientation or with forcing behavior to win one's position. A
dominating person is likely to use his or her position power to

impose his or her will on the subordinates (or superiors) and command their obedience.

**AVOIDING** (Low concern for self and others). This style is characterized by withdrawal, buck-passing, sidestepping, etc. The individual with this style shows an unconcerned attitude toward the issues or parties involved in conflict.

**COMPROMISING** (Moderate concern for self and others). This is a give-and-take situation in which both parties give up something to reach a mutually acceptable decision. This means splitting the differences, exchanging concessions, or seeking a middle ground position.

The styles of handling interpersonal conflict can be further classified according to the terminology of the game theory. Integrating style can be reclassified into positive sum (win-win), compromising into mixed (no-win/no-lose), and obliging, dominating, and avoiding into zero sum (lose-win, win-lose, and lose-lose) styles.

Although some behavioral scientists suggest that integrating or problem-solving is the most appropriate style for managing conflict (e.g. Blake & Mouton, 1964; Burke, 1969; Likert & Likert, 1976), others suggest that the appropriateness of a particular style varies from situation to situation (Hart, 1971; Rahim & Bonoma, 1979; Thomas, 1977).

Much of the psychological research on conflict handling styles has emphasized the importance of individual differences (e.g., Jones & Melcher, 1982; Sternberg & Soriano, 1984; Terhune,

1970). While the importance of individual differences cannot be overlooked, it is likely that in an organizational setting a number of organizational variables may also have an impact on the form of conflict behavior. Among those variables that have been identified are the topic or source of conflict (Renwick, 1975), the size of the issue (Musser, 1982; Thomas, 1976), the presence of organizational regulating mechanisms (Van de Vliert, 1984), and relative power of the parties (Kabanoff, 1986).

## Correlates of Conflict Handling Styles

The following discussion presents a review of some of the important correlates of conflict handling styles.

**Personality/Behavioral Dispositions and Conflict Handling Styles**. Individuals tend to behave in a characteristic manner in a particular situation. The behavior patterns constitute the personality traits of an individual. The traits cause differences in perception and behavior, thus leading to variation in their style of handling conflict. Berkowitz (1962) observed that individuals have a hierarchy of responses for dealing with conflict. At the top is the dominant style--the habitual reaction of a person (Blake & Mouton, 1964). These responses are partially shaped by motives and abilities. Problem solving is easier for people who are creative and who can deal cognitively with complex issues (Follet, 1941). High need to exercise power results in a competitive reaction (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970; Stagner, 1962). Managers with high affiliative or interaction need may lean toward accommodation (Stagner, 1962). Terhune

(1970) found that the effects of personality are minimized under high conflict of interest, anticipated threat from opponent, and actual competition from opponent.

Kilmann and Thomas (1975) studied the styles of handling conflict in relation to four dimensions of Jungian personality. Results revealed that extroverts were likely to strive more for collaborative or integrative style than introverts. Using the same scale, Chanin and Schneer (1984) found that "feelers" tended to handle conflict through compromise and accommodation, while "thinkers" tended to compete or collaborate. Other studies have found low correlations between personality and conflict handling styles (Bell & Blakeney, 1977; Jones & Melcher, 1982). This may be due to the inability to control the hierarchical relationship between the parties involved and the situations or issues of conflict. Kabanoff (1987) studied four personality variables in relation to conflict handling styles. He found the need to control to be positively related to the competing mode and inclusion to be negatively related to competing. Neither Machiavellianism nor locus of control was found to be associated with any of the conflict measures.

Unfortunately, the implication of personality predisposition has not received adequate attention in the literature. This is due to the contingency approach taken by researchers (Filley, 1975; Thomas, 1976), which undermines the importance of personality factors. Terhune (1970), however, feels that "personality effects do seem influential and highly important in

cooperation-conflict behavior ... certainly the researcher should not be discouraged if personality effects do not just pop out on first analysis, especially in complex situations" (p. 230).

**Bases of Power and Conflict Handling Styles.** Power bases are a core variable in understanding the development of different roles within organizations. This has implications for understanding the variation in people's style of handling conflict and how conflict may arise; people with different power bases develop incompatible identities, expectations, and behaviors. Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the effects of bases of power (Ansari, in press; French & Raven, 1959; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970) on work performance and subordinate satisfaction. These bases of power are: coercive (the capacity to remove rewards and administer punishments); reward (the capacity to provide rewards); expert (having special knowledge and expertise); legitimate (the right to influence or obligation on the part of the other to yield to this influence); information (having access to valuable information); connection (having connections with important and influential persons); and referent (perceived attraction of members in a relationship).

Raven and Kruglanski (1970) reviewed several studies to examine the relationship between social power and social conflict and concluded that the power analysis provided a richer basis for the analysis of dyadic conflict. Lusch (1976), in a study of automobile manufacturers and their dealer network, found that coercive sources of power increased and noncoercive sources

decreased manufacture-dealer conflict. Jamieson and Thomas (1974) examined students' perception of their teachers' bases of power and their (students) own modes of handling conflict. At high school and undergraduate levels, students were found to be less accommodating and more competing with teachers who used coercive power, which was also positively correlated with competing at the graduate level. Referent power induced accommodating mode at both high school and undergraduate levels but collaboration only at the graduate level.

Research on power has been mostly concerned with how absolute differences in power affect people's conflict behavior. It has generally been found that more powerful parties engage in more assertive modes and weaker parties use less assertive mode (e.g., Begley, 1983; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1983; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980). One exception in this regard is Kabanoff (1986) who reports that conflict resolution is influenced by qualitative power. Authority is positively related to assertive modes and negatively related to cooperative modes. Allocation and referent power are found to be positively related to assertion, while precedence power seems to reduce preference for competing.

<u>Organizational Climate and Conflict Handling Styles</u>. As mentioned earlier, Likert and Likert (1976) have extended the concept of participative management to conflict management. They have provided some evidence that a more positive climate, such as system IV (participative), can provide a more functional

managment of conflict than systems I, II, and III. It is assumed that a more positive climate will enable the members to confront their disagreements in a constructive manner. Kumar and Srivastava (1978) studied the actual and desired modes of conflict resolution among Indian managers in relation to their perceived organizational climate. Litwin and Stringer's (1968) questionnaire of organizational climate was used to measure structure, standard, responsibility, identity, warmth, reward, risk, support, and tolerance. Compromise and withdrawal barely correlated to any of the climate dimensions. Confrontation was correlated to all climate dimensions except standard and responsibility.

**Referent Role and Conflict Handling Styles**. Organization lays the ground for conflict by providing different statuses to people along the vertical dimension. Subordinates mostly abide by what the superior says. This is especially true when superiors are authoritative. It is thus expected that an individual will probably use obliging style more with superiors than with subordinates or peers. It is also expected that avoiding style will be used more with superiors than peers and more with peers than subordinates (Kahn et al., 1964). Philips and Cheston (1979) reported that a forcing approach is most common in handling differences with subordinates than with peers and much less common with superiors. A study by Rahim (1983) indicated that executives were more obliging with their bosses and integrating and compromising with their subordinates and

peers.

Mathur and Sayeed (1980) found a moderate degree of dissimilarity between manager's own practices and his perception regarding conflict management strategies of his immediate superior. Variation in applying strategies to resolve conflict of both the manager and his superior was found. The managers (as self) seem to prefer toning-down differences, confrontation, compromise, following rules, accommodating others, consulting, forcing, and avoiding argument, in that order. On the other hand, superior prefers toning-down differences, consulting, forcing, avoiding arguments, and accommodating others, in that order.

Burke (1970) found that subordinates perceived conflict to be handled constructively when they perceived superiors as accommodative or collaborative, and least constructively when they were perceived as competitive or avoidant. Similar results were found in inter-departmental relations where managers' satisfaction with negotiations varied positively with collaboration and accommodation and negatively with competition and avoidance.

A decisional model was presented by Musser (1982) to show how subordinates actually choose a behavioral style to deal with high-stakes conflict with superior(s). The choice was found to be guided by the desire to remain in the organization, perceived congruence between the superior and their own attitudes and beliefs, and perceived protection from arbitrary action.

Contrary to the results described above, Renwick (1975) found no relationship between organizational status and the likelihood with which each of the five styles would be used. This discrepancy has been attributed to the single item instrument that was used to measure the styles (Rahim, 1986).

**Sex and Conflict Handling Styles**. Rahim (1983) investigated the difference in the styles of handling interpersonal conflict of men and women and found that women were more integrating, avoiding, and compromising, and less obliging than men. These findings support the results obtained by Kilmann and Thomas (1977). On the contrary, Renwick (1977) reported that "no differences were observed between the likelihood with which male and female subordinates would use various methods to deal with disagreement" (p. 403). Thus the findings are mixed with respect to gender and conflict handling styles.

**Communication Styles and Conflict Handling Styles**. Communication is an important reality of organizational life. Thus the identification of key areas where conflict preferences relate to specific outcomes and the structuring of behavior becomes significant. Morley and Zalaback (1987) found that individuals with preference for avoidance and compromise exhibited identifiable organizational communication styles. In an earlier study (1984), they had found a relationship between conflict handling styles and communication apprehension. Additionally, Conrad (1985) has suggested that when the anticipation or the act of communication is stressful,

individuals prefer the avoiding, accommodating, and compromising styles.

**Organizational Variables and Conflict Handling Styles**. Studies relating conflict handling styles to organizational performance indicate somewhat mixed results. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) found organizations using the collaborative style to be better able to integrate efforts of various departments. Jones and White (1985) reported a negative correlation between smoothing style and task effectiveness, whereas the confrontation style was positively correlated. Collaboration has also been found to be positively related to promotability (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Dutton & Walton, 1966; Thomas, 1971). But, Thomas (1971) found no relationship between preference for competitive style and promotability. Wilson, Goodall, and Waagen (1986) showed that avoidance is the least productive for organizational members.

## The Problem Formulation

The above discussion throws light on the sources and dynamics of organizational conflict in general. Yet, the factors which affect the styles of handling conflict have not been adequately examined. Several questions are yet to be answered in this regard. What are the various styles of handling conflict? Who uses these styles and what are the conditions that precipitate the use of these styles? What predisposes an individual to adopt or choose one style over the other? Is the choice guided by personal or situational factors, or do both--

personal and situational factors--jointly determine the course of action to be taken by an individual? Whether people use similar styles while handling differences with superiors, subordinates, and peers, or is their choice guided by other factors such as the status of the target person, the extent of influence that he or she may have over the other, his or her bases of power or the perceived power of the target, the degree of conflict between a person and the target, or the basic cause or issue of conflict itself? Causes may range from personality differences to differences in values, beliefs, skills, etc., power incongruence, resource scarcity, to mention a few. What are the bases of power? Does bases of power alone or in interaction with climate and/or personal attributes determine the strategy to be adopted by the actor? The present study is an attempt to address some of these questions.

## Focus of the Problem

The prime focus of this study is on conflict handling styles. Specifically, the study aims at examining some of the antecedents of conflict handling styles at the interpersonal level. These styles may be used for resolving differences with superiors and subordinates. Organizations plant the seeds of conflict by assigning different statuses to people. The style that an actor adopts may be guided by his or her own personal attributes or the perceived bases of power at the disposal of the target person. The status of the person determines the kind of power he or she possesses. Causes of conflict, extent of

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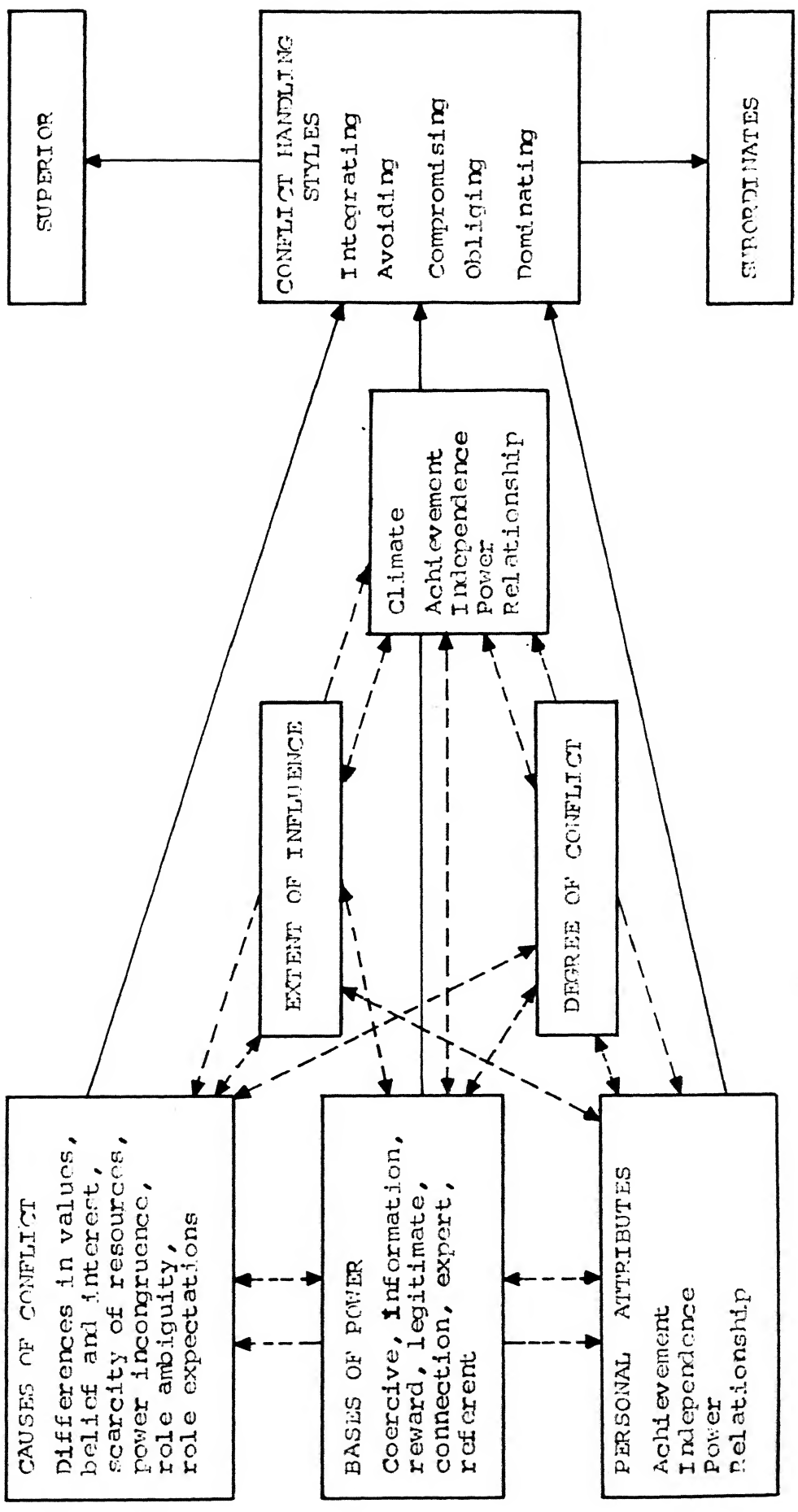


Figure 1.2. Posited relationships among variables (solid and broken lines indicate independent and interaction effects, respectively).

approach has been found to be used more frequently with subordinates than with peers and less frequently with superiors. Studies by Mathur and Sayeed (1980) and Burke (1970) also report such relationships between conflict handling styles and the status of the target person.

In line with these findings, it is hypothesized that the use of conflict handling styles will be determined by the hierarchical relationship that exists between the parties involved. Stated otherwise, different sets of styles will be used for handling differences with superiors and subordinates. For example, respondents would more frequently use obliging and avoiding styles with superiors and integrating, compromising, and dominating styles with subordinates.

(2) **Personal Attributes and Conflict Handling Styles**. Studies by Bell and Blackeney (1977), Chanin and Schneer (1984), and Jones and Melcher (1982) suggest that the knowledge of what predisposes individuals to favor and select one means of handling conflict over another could have immense theoretical and practical values.

In the present analysis, four needs will be examined in relation to conflict handling styles. These needs are: achievement, power, independence, and relationships. Considering the relative paucity of systematic empirical research in this direction, it is difficult to formulate any specific hypothesis. However, it is expected that personal attributes will contribute significantly to the variance in the styles of handling conflict.

Need for achievement (n Ach) is defined as the need to strive for excellence or success. Individuals high on n Ach have been characterized as "realistic" and have occupational goals that are congruent with their abilities (Mahone, 1960; Morris, 1966), have a desire for intermediate risk-taking and feedback, are able to delay gratification (Mischel, 1961), and take personal responsibility and generally perceive themselves as high in ability. It has been found that a positive relationship exists between n Ach and collaboration (Bell & Blakency, 1977). It is, thus hypothesized that n Ach will be correlated with the integrating style.

Need for power (n Pow) may be viewed as the desire to feel powerful (McClelland, 1975) or striving to be powerful (Winter, 1973). People high on n Pow are characterized by their striving for formal institutionalized power, by their attempts to make themselves more visible, by building alliances (that is, expanding their network of social contacts), and by seeking prestige. Sldnick (1966) found a positive relationship of n Pow with drives for social ties, control, and the trait for aggression. It is, then, hypothesized that n Pow will be related to the dominating style.

Need for independence (n Ind) or autonomy may be defined as the need to overcome opposition, avoid responsibilities, and do what one likes. It is expected that n Ind will be related to the dominating style.

Finally, need for relationship (n Rel) is the need to secure

and maintain friendly associations with others. People high on this need have a desire to satisfy the concern of others. It is thus expected that $\underline{n}$ Rel will be related to the obliging and compromising styles for handling conflict.

(3) **Perceived Climate of the Organization and Conflict Handling Styles**. The literature on conflict, in general, fails to throw light on the relationship between organizational climate and the use of conflict handling styles. Likert and Likert (1978) provide some evidence in favor of a participative climate for the constructive solution of disputes and disagreements. Using the Litwin and Stringer (1968) questionnaire of organizational climate, Kumar and Srivastava (1978) found that whereas confrontation correlated to all the dimensions of climate except standard and responsibility, compromise and withdrawal barely correlated to any dimension.

It is expected that the perceived climate of the organization will contribute significantly to the variance in conflict handling styles. For example, if the organization is perceived to be achievement-oriented, then respondents would more likely use the integrating style. If it is perceived to be power or independence-oriented, then respondents would more likely employ the use of dominating style. Similarly, if the organization is perceived to be relationship-oriented, then respondents would more frequently use the obliging and compromising styles for resolving conflicts.

**(4) <u>Targets' Perceived Bases of Power and Conflict Handling</u> <u>Styles</u>**. Studies suggest that a positive relationship exists between coercive power and competing and between referent power and accommodating (e.g., Jamieson & Thomas, 1974). Kabanoff (1986) studied the relationship between conflict mode chosen and social power as mediated by people's feeling of cooperativeness and assertiveness. Cooperativeness was a significant factor in the choice of all the five modes, while assertiveness affected the competing, accommodating, and avoiding modes. Authority, allocation, precedence, and referent power influenced conflict mode preferences, whereas expert and information power did not. Authority had the most consistent influence upon conflict modes and upon people's reported level of assertiveness. While allocation provides a sense of "territoriality", precedence power is a less "personalized" form of power that people are less likely to express assertively.

Based on these studies, it is expected that perception of the targets' bases of power will contribute significantly to the variance in the styles of handling conflict. A dominating style is likely to correlate with coercive and legitimate power; compromising and obliging with reward and referent power; integrating with legitimate, expert, connection, and information power.

**(5) <u>Causes of Conflict and Conflict Handling Styles</u>**. The literature on conflict does not pay adequate attention to the relationship between causes of conflict and conflict handling

styles. Though there are studies at the theoretical level, there is no systematic empirical evidence to support this relationship.

The potential causes of conflict may be innumerable and may vary from individual to individual. The causes may be traced to the individual as well as the envoironment. Feelings and emotions, interests, values, thoughts, goals, etc. are some of the potential causes of conflict (Cosier & Rose, 1977; Druckman & Zechmeister, 1973; Guetzkow & Gyr, 1954; Thomas, 1976). Status concerns have been linkeo to conflict in interdepartmental relations (Whyte, 1948). Pondy (1967) defined three sources of conflict: competition for scarce resources, drives for autonomy-power, and divergence of subunit goals. The present study examines five causes of conflict: scarcity of resources; power incongruence; differences in values, beliefs, and interests; role expectations; and role ambiguity.

In view of the relative paucity of systematic empirical research, it is difficult to formulate any specific hypothesis. However, it is expected that a positive relationship will exist between dominating style and scarcity of resources, because scarcity evokes struggle among the people to obtain the product. A compromising or integrating style will be related to role expectations. If there is incongruence in what a person is doing and what he or she is expected to do, then he or she is likely to be integrating if interacting with superior and compromising if interacting with subordinates. Similarly, an avoiding mode will be used for role ambiguity. Since a person does not know what to

do, he or she is most likely to withdraw from that situation. An integrating style will be used if there are differences in values, beliefs, and interests. Finally, a dominating style will be used for power incongruence.

(6) Interaction of Personal Attributes with Organizational Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles. Contingency theorists have attempted to study the interaction between the characteristics of an individual and those of a given situation in predicting a particular behavior. Dunn (1977), for example, studied commitment to the organization in relation to the congruence of personal needs with organizational climate. Ansari, Baumgartel, and Sullivan (1982) found that managerial success depends upon the fit between work orientation and objective organizational climate. Fiedler and Mahar (1979) postulated that the effectiveness of a leader depends upon the match between his or her motivational structure and situational control.

Dearth of research on match model in this problem area inhibits the formulation of any specific hypothesis. However, it is anticipated that conflict handling styles will vary as a function of the match between organizational climate and personal attributes of the person. If a person is achievement oriented and perceives the organization to be the same, he or she would more frequently employ the integrating style. Similarly, a fit between person and organization in terms of power and independence would result in the frequent use of a dominating

style.    An obliging style will be used more often if a person is relationship oriented and perceives his or her organization to be the same.  It is also expected that if a person is power oriented and perceives his or her organization to be achievement oriented, then  he or she would more frequently use the  integrating  style followed by dominating style.  In the same way, different  styles will  be used for different combinations of personal and  climate factors.

(7)  Interaction of Targets' Perceived Bases of  Power  with Personal Attributes on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles.    It is expected that conflict handling styles will vary as a function of  the  interaction  between  the  personal  attributes  of  the respondents and the targets' perceived bases of power.    Scarcity of  research  on this subject  inhibits the  formulation  of  any directional hypothesis.  However, some conjectures may be made.

It  is anticipated that if a person is achievement  oriented and  perceives  the target person to have expert  or  information power,  then  he  or she is more likely to  use  the  integrating style.    Similarly if  a person  is  independence  oriented  and perceives the target person to possess coercive power, then he or she  is  more  likely to use the dominating style.    It  is  also expected  that a compromising style will be used more often if  a person  is power oriented and perceives the other person to  have a reward or referent base of power.

These  styles  are  likely to vary with the  status  of  the target  person, as well.  If the respondent perceives his or  her

supe ior to have coercive power, then he or she is more likely to use the avoiding style, whereas he or she is more likely to use a dominating or integrating style if he or she perceives his or her subordinates to have coercive power.

(8) **Interaction of Degree of Conflict with Personal Attributes on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles**. It is expected that the degree of conflict will interact significantly with personal attributes to have an impact on conflict handling styles. That is, if a person is power or independence oriented and perceives a great deal of conflict with the target person, then he or she is more likely to use the integrating style if the target is a subordinate and avoiding style if the target is a superior. Similarly, if a person is achievement oriented and perceives a high degree of conflict with his or her superior, then he or she is more likely to employ an integrating style, and a dominating style if he or she perceives a high degree of conflict with subordinates.

(9) **Interaction of Degree of Conflict with Perceived Climate of the Organization on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles**. It is expected that the interaction of degree of conflict with climate will contribute significantly to the variance in the styles of handling conflict. For example, in a high conflict situation, if the respondent perceives the organization to be power or independence oriented, then he or she is more likely to employ an avoiding style for resolving conflict. An integrating style will be used if the respondent perceives a great deal of

conflic⁺ and the organization to be achievement oriented.

ın addition to these major hypotheses, the study will also at⊥empt to examine the interactions between the extent of influence and personal attributes and/climate, between extent of influence and targets' perceived bases of power, and between the degree of conflict and causes of conflict. Considering the paucity of research on these factors, no hypothesis of these interaction effects is being ventured. These relationships will be examined on a purely exploratory basis.

(10) **Personal Data, Organizational Characteristics and Conflict Handling Styles**. Although no empirical evidence exists which shows the impact of ownership on the use of conflict handling styles, one study (Rahim, 1983) is available which shows the relationship between job levels and conflict handling styles. The obliging and avoiding styles have been found to be used more frequently at the lower levels of management. In view of this finding, it is hypothesized that job level would explain a significant amount of variance in the use of conflict handling styles. It is also expected that ownership will make a significant difference in the use of handling styles, considering the inbuilt differences between public and private sector organizations. Respondents are more likely to use the integrating style in private sectors and dominating style in public sector organizations. Conflict handling styles are also expected to vary as a function of the personal data of the respondents. Age, education, tenure in the organization, number

of promotions, etc are expected to contribute significantly to the variance in the use of handling styles.

# Chapter 2

## METHODOLOGY

## Research Site

The study was conducted in six different organizations in Northern India. Out of the six organizations, three were privately managed and three public enterprises. Their descriptions are as follows.

### Organization A

This is a public limited company affiliated to the ICI of the UK. Established in the late 1960's, this organization is now in an intensely competitive situation, with the availability exceeding the demand. Mainly a Urea plant, it works at a 95% capacity. The other business sectors of this organization deal with explosives, paints, polythene, rubber chemical, pharmaceuticals, and polyester staple fibre.

The organization is headed by a Chief Executive. He is assisted by a Finance Manager, a General Manager (GM), and a General Manager (Works). GM (Works) is assisted by a Works Operations Manager, a Chief Engineer, a Senior Personnel Manager, and a Manager. Managers are assisted by Deputy Superintendents and the staff.

In recent years, there has been a tremendous problem of power supply, and inspite of a captive 12 MW power plant, sustained efforts have been necessary to ensure a continuous supply to the works. Despite this problem, sterling support from

all ,ections of the workforce ensured record production and efficiency for the first few months in 1987, and it was only market constraints that imposed limitations in the last quarter. The market situation necessitated discounts well above the standard levels. During the year, the selling price was raised from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 2,350 per tonne and the retention price was reduced correspondingly.

Quality control, in this organization, is considered a very important function. A fully equipped laboratory manned by highly qualified experts look into all aspects of the production, from testing the standards of the raw materials to the quality of the finished product.

Presently this organization employs about 1,720 employees including about 280 managers and supervisory staff. The employees have formed an employee union, a fertilizers union, and a mazdoor union. The financial profile of the organization shows that it has been running in profit inspite of natural hindrances, market constraints, and power breakdown. The general picture of the organization reveals a highly professional environment.

Data were collected in all the departments of this organization. Managerial and supervisory personnel were approached.

## Organization B

This is a private limited company involved in business of manufacturers, fabricators, importers, and dealers of two- and three-wheeler vehicles. Established in the 1970's, its

registered works office is located in a major industrial city of Uttar Pradesh and five main marketing and controlling offices spread over major cities of India.

The organization is headed by a Board of Directors consisting of a Chairman and a Managing Director, followed by a President, a Finance Director, and a Secretary. The company has employed professionally qualified personnels in various fields including finance, marketing, and production. It has four subsidiary companies manufacturing mainly fibre and synthetic.

Since 1984, manufacture of two-wheeler scooter has become the major activity of this organization, which has recorded spectacular growth. Initially starting with imported component of over 60%, this organization has now observed a significant reduction in the import content.

Recently this organization has introduced new models of two-wheelers which are being exported to a number of countries. Marketing, servicing, and spare part network have expanded markedly. Today, it is having about 250 authorized representatives and distributors across the country.

Presently this organization employs about 4,000 employees including about 250 managers. Inspite of substantial increase in production, factors beyond control have adversely influenced the turnover. Continuous and rapid erosion in the value of rupee, high import duty, and increase in excise duty had a snow-balling effect in raising the cost of production without a corresponding increase in the selling price. The turnover of this organization

for the year 1986-88 was about Rs. 26,498.50 lacs. In 1987, the organization was adversely affected by strike and lockout. The workers were misled by outside agencies. A general feeling of dissatisfaction seemed to prevail among the employees. The major problem at the time of data collection was of surplus employees.

Data were collected from the production, personnel, finance, marketing, and R & D departments. Managers were interviewed from the middle and lower levels.

## Organization C

This is a privately managed company which has ushered in a whole new era of packaging in India. Established in 1981, this organization manufactures circular weaving machines. It has two other manufacturing divisions, besides a well-equipped, highly sophisticated R & D Center.

The organization is headed by a Director and Executive Director, a General Manager (GM), Manager, Assistant Manager, Engineers, Supervisors, etc., in that order. The production wing is managed by the GM and the commercial wing is managed by Managers and Assistant Managers. The corporate body is managed by the personnel department.

With around 1,000 four- and six-shuttle circular weaving machines installed all over the country, this organization is the undisputed market leader, with approximately 75% of the market share. Of its two divisions, the first division manufactures most sophisticated slit film lines, using cast film process.

The second division manufactures precision components for textile machinary.

Presently this organization employs about 245 employees including the managerial staff. The financial profile of the organization shows that it has been running in profit. The general picture of the organization reveals a professional envoironment.

Data were collected from middle and lower level executives from all the departments.

## Organization D

This is a private limited company and is a sister concern of organization C. Established in 1985, this organization manufactures machinary for the processing of man-made fibres. The company manufactures two-for-one twisting machines for the synthetic filament industry, in technical collaboration with ACBF of France.

The organization is headed by a Director, a General Manager, a Manager, an Assistant Manager, Engineers, and Supervisors. The organization is divided into production and commercial wings.

The machines manufactured by this organization have double throughput and perform at very favorable cost efficiency. This was a major development for the Indian Textile Industry and was an instant success. Encouraged by this success, this organization is now poised for rapid expansion of their manufacturing facility and product range. To match the

international standards of its renowned collaborators, the organization lays special emphasis on stringent quality control.

Presently this organization employs about 236 employees including management. The financial profile of this organization shows that it has been running in profit.

Data were collected from all the departments of the organization. Executives were interviewed from the middle and lower levels.

## Organization E

This is a public limited organization and is one of the five divisions of the state owned organizations, with its headquarter in Bangalore. This industrial complex is responsible for developing and producing, both for the civil and military markets, a wide range of aeronautical goods including complete aircrafts, power plant ancilliary equipment, etc.

The organization is headed by a General Manager. The Board of Directors represents the top management comprising a Chairman, a Managing Director, a Director (Finance), a Financial Advisor, and a Joint Secretary, in that order.

The division is primarily engaged in manufacturing medium transport aircraft, a role for which it was conceived and created. The history and growth of this organization is synonymous with the growth of Aeronautical Industry in India over the last 40 years. In 1940, a company producing aircrafts was formed at Bangalore. The management of the company's affairs was resumed by the Government of India in 1945. In 1963, Aeronautics

India limited was incorporated to undertake the manufacture of aircraft under licence agreement. The government subsequently decided to amalgamate the two companies for effective planning and coordination in the aircraft industry. The merger took place in 1964.

This organization as a whole constitutes five divisions producing aircrafts, engines, helicopters, foundry and forge, accessories, etc. Various departments and sections essential to a commercial organization such as cost control, industrial management, customer relations, etc. have been set up and consolidated. Simultaneously, industrial welfare has also been stepped up and various facilities and amenities are now available to the workers.

Presently the organization employes about 4,500 employees including about 300 managers.

The financial profile of the organization shows that it has been running in profit. The general picture reveals efficiency, cordial relations, and general satisfaction.

The study was conducted at the Head Office of this division. Data were collected from managers and supervisors.

## Organization F

This is a truly national company with international affiliations. Incorporated and registered in 1979, this organization is now among the five largest electronics companies in the country. It has a head office in the state capital, five regional offices located in major cities, 18 sales offices, and

nine factories across the country.

The organization is headed by a Chairman of the Board of Directors. He is assisted by a Vice Chairman and a Managing Director. Under them is a Divisional Incharge for its various production areas. Each divisional incharge is assisted by managers, engineers, and supervisory staff.

Starting with a single television factory a decade ago, this organization now has six manufacturing units and three associated units. These units manufacture a diverse range of high tech electronic products, catering to both national and international markets. Developed through an in-house R & D coupled with technology transfer from overseas, it has attracted world leaders to be its collaborators, and has successfully absorbed and adopted the most advanced technologies to Indian conditions. The products are marketed and supported through a national network of 23 offices.

Presently the organization employs about 4,000 personnel including about 200 managers. The organization believes that the foundation of organizational excellence lies in its human resources--by training its workforce to improve its skills, in recognizing and rewarding performance, etc. The financial profile of this organization shows that it has been running in profit. No significant incident has occured except one major strike in 1987, the major cause of which was general dissatisfaction and demand for bonus.

The study was conducted at the Head Office of this

organization. Executives were interviewed from two levels--
supervisory and managerial.

## The Sample

Two hundred twenty-five male executives representing six
different organizations (described above) voluntarily
participated in the study. They were randomly selected from the
middle and lower levels of management. Table 2.1 depicts the
details of the sample. As is evident, of the 225 sampled
executives, 53.8% were drawn from the lower and 46.2% from the
middle levels of management.

Table 2.1

Distribution of Respondents at two Levels in Organizations

| Organization | Levels | | Total | % |
| | Lower | Middle | | |
| A | 43 | 22 | 65 | 28.9 |
| B | 20 | 16 | 36 | 16.0 |
| C | 08 | 12 | 20 | 8.9 |
| D | 11 | 22 | 33 | 14.7 |
| E | 26 | 20 | 46 | 20.4 |
| F | 13 | 12 | 25 | 11.1 |
| Total | 121 | 104 | 225 | |
| % | 53.8 | 46.2 | | 100.00 |

Table 2.2 depicts the percentage distribution of the respondents on demographic characteristics. A major bulk of the respondents (35.3%) were in the age group of 24-29 years. The number of respondents descends as the years increase. Regarding the education of the respondents, about 50% had professional degrees, followed by those having a master's degree (28.9%), and a bachelor's degree (20%). As regards the tenure of the respondents, about 55% were serving in their organization for 5 years or less, followed by those (17.8%) who were serving their organization for 16 to 20 years. Similarly, about 83.3% of the respondents were in their present positions for 1 to 4 years, followed by those (8.7%) who were in the present assignments for 5 to 9 years.

The number of promotions that a respondent had attained in his professional career ranged from none to 6 or more. About 33% of the respondents had received 2 to 3 promotions in their career. Regarding the number of subordinates reporting directly to the respondent, it was observed that, about 70% had ten or fewer number of subordinates reporting to them, followed by those (18.2%) who had 11 to 12 subordinates directly under them. About 45% of the respondents had achieved a good deal of success in thier career followed by those (38%) who had achieved some success. As to the earned monthly income, about 37% of the respondents had an income below Rs. 3,001, followed by those (24.4%) who had an income over Rs. 5,000.

Table 2.2

Percentage Distribution of Respondents on Background Characteristics

| Variables | Level | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Lower | Middle | |
| **Age (in years):** | | | |
| 24 or less | 9.4 | 4.4 | 13.8 |
| 25 to 29 | 14.0 | 7.5 | 21.5 |
| 30 to 34 | 5.3 | 7.0 | 12.3 |
| 35 to 39 | 3.5 | 6.7 | 10.2 |
| 40 to 44 | 8.0 | 6.7 | 14.7 |
| 45 to 49 | 8.1 | 5.3 | 13.4 |
| 50 to 54 | 4.4 | 6.7 | 11.1 |
| 55 or more | 1.4 | 1.6 | 3.0 |
| **Education:** | | | |
| Intermediate | 1.3 | 0.4 | 1.7 |
| Bachelor's degree | 12.9 | 7.1 | 20.0 |
| Master's degree | 15.6 | 13.3 | 28.9 |
| Professional degree | 24.00 | 25.3 | 49.3 |
| **Tenure in present organization (in years):** | | | |
| 1 to 5 | 27.6 | 27.7 | 55.3 |
| 6 to 10 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 5.7 |
| 11 to 15 | 2.1 | 1.3 | 3.4 |
| 16 to 20 | 11.6 | 6.2 | 17.8 |
| 21 or more | 9.8 | 8.0 | 17.8 |
| **Tenure in present position (in years):** | | | |
| 1 to 4 | 42.0 | 41.3 | 83.3 |
| 5 or more | 11.6 | 5.0 | 16.6 |

Number of Promotions:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 to 1 | 28.5 | 10.7 | 39.2 |
| 2 to 3 | 15.5 | 17.8 | 33.3 |
| 4 or more | 9.7 | 17.7 | 27.4 |

------------------------------------------------------------

Number of subordinates reporting to respondents:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 or less | 39.2 | 31.0 | 70.2 |
| 11 or more | 15.0 | 14.8 | 29.8 |

------------------------------------------------------------

Achieved Success:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 or less | 2.2 | 0.4 | 2.6 |
| 2 to 3 | 9.3 | 4.4 | 13.7 |
| 4 to 5 | 20.0 | 18.7 | 38.7 |
| 6 to 7 | 22.3 | 22.7 | 45.0 |

------------------------------------------------------------

Monthly Income (in rupees):

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Below Rs. 3,001 | 27.1 | 10.2 | 37.3 |
| Between Rs. 3,001 and 3,500 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 8.9 |
| Between Rs. 3,501 and 4,000 | 2.2 | 7.1 | 9.3 |
| Between Rs. 4,001 and 4,500 | 3.1 | 5.3 | 8.4 |
| Between Rs. 4,501 and 5,000 | 6.7 | 4.9 | 11.6 |
| Over Rs. 5,000 | 9.3 | 15.1 | 24.4 |

Table 2.3 shows the mean scores on background characteristics. A cursory glance shows significant differences between lower and middle levels of respondents in terms of education, tenure in present position, number of promotions, achieved success, and monthly income. Respondents at middle levels were significantly more educated than those at lower levels. In terms of their tenure in present position, it was observed that respondents at lower levels had been in their

Table 2.3

Mean scores on Background Characteristics

| Variables | Levels of Management | | |
| | Lower ($\underline{n}$ = 121) | Middle ($\underline{n}$ = 104) | $\underline{F}$ (1,223) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | 35.53 | 37.90 | 2.90 |
| Education | 4.16 | 4.37 | 3.84[a] |
| Tenure in present organization | 10.45 | 8.91 | 1.57 |
| Tenure in present position | 4.12 | 2.65 | 6.65[b] |
| Number of promotions | 1.74 | 3.02 | 28.06[b] |
| Number of subordinates | 10.02 | 14.78 | 2.84 |
| Achieved success | 4.71 | 5.21 | 7.20[b] |
| Monthly income | 2.72 | 3.79 | 15.85[b] |

Note. $\underline{N}$ = 225; a $\underline{p}$ < .05; b $\underline{p}$ < .01.

present assignments for a significantly longer duration as compared to those at middle levels. Similarly, respondents at middle levels had secured more promotions, perceived themselves to have achieved more success, and were drawing higher salary than the respondents at lower levels. This trend may be because education, number of promotions, achieved success, and monthly income, are all positively tied with the hierarchical level.

## The Instruments

A questionnaire was prepared consisting of various tests and measures. The measures were based on various studies available in organizational literature. The questionnaire was divided into five sections (see Appendix A). Section I dealt with items relating to the ways of handling differences with immediate subordinates. Section II consisted of items relating to personal attributes. Section III assessed the perceptions and observations about the organization. Section IV dealt with items relating to the ways of handling differences with immediate superior. Finally, Section V consisted of items assessing the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

In the present analysis, most of the measures were subjected to a varimax rotated factor analysis. Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, and Bent (1975) have described five methods of factoring in the SPSS manual. Two most commonly used methods for factoring are: Principal Factoring without Iteration (PA1) and Principal Factoring with Iteration (PA2). For the present purpose, all the measures which were subjected to a factor analysis were analyzed using the PA2 method for communality and varimax rotation. The PA2 method has two major advantages over the PA1 method. First, it automatically replaces the main diagonal elements of the correlation matrix with communality estimates. In this way, the user automatically gets the so-called inferred factor. Second, it employs an iteration procedure for improving the estimates of communality. Varimax

rotation emphasizes on cleaning up the factors rather than variables. For each factor, varimax rotation tends to yield high loadings for a few variables and the rest of the loadings in the factor are expected to be near zero. This results in cleaning up the factor.

After computing the factor analysis, the items retained for final analyses were selected on the basis of the following criteria. First, the solution was constrained using the criterion of eigenvalues _generally_ greater than 1.00, and meeting the criteria of factor loadings _generally_ not less than .30 on the defining component and no cross-loadings greater than .25. In cases, where an item loaded heavily with two factors, it was retained at both places. Second, items were selected on an examination of each items' correlation with items in remaining factors. That is, items had high intercorrelations within a factor and low correlations with the remaining factors. A description of the measures used in the present study is given below.

## Conflict Handling Styles Measure

The scale comprised 35 items drawn from Rahim's (1983) measure of the styles of handling interpersonal conflict. This measure has its roots in the instruments designed by Blake and Mouton (1964), Hall (1969), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), and Thomas and Kilmann (1974). The previously developed measures are currently available for measuring the styles of handling conflict. Although factor analysis is the most powerful method

of construct validation (Kerlinger, 1973), these instruments fail to provide evidence for the factorial independence of the five scales (Rahim, 1983). According to Thomas and Kilmann (1978), "the overall reliability coefficients for the four instruments fall within the low-to-moderate range" (p. 1142).

Rahim's (1983) measure was designed to construct factorially independent scales to measure the five styles of handling conflict and to provide evidence for their reliability and validity. Each item was cast on a 5-point Likert scale. The data from repeated administrations were factor analyzed. After each factor analysis, the items that loaded less than .40 were discarded. The final instrument contained 35 items. These items were analyzed using principal factoring with iteration and varimax rotation. The analysis extracted eight factors with eigenvalues greater than or equal to 1.00 (Rahim, 1983). The first five factors were consistent with a priori expectations. The final instrument retained 28 items with factor loadings greater than or equal to .40 (Rahim, 1983).

For the present purpose, the measure was varied in terms of the rating scale and the criteria for retaining an item. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a 7-point scale (1 = never; 7 = always), as to how frequently they involved in the behaviors mentioned to resolve differences with their immediate superior or subordinates. The scale consisted of all the 35 items instead of 28 items. The responses to the items of handling differences with superior and subordinates were combined

and then factor analyzed. The factor analysis results are reported in Table 2.4 along with factor loadings obtained in Rahim's study. As is evident, the measure constrained to five interpretable factors, accounting for a total of 83.4% of the variance. A separate analysis was done for immediate superior and subordinates, and a similar pattern emerged with slight variations in the number of items for each factor. Factor 1, Integrating, consisted of items showing exchange of ideas, collaboration, etc. to come to the best possible solution.

Factor 2, Avoiding, consisted of items showing avoidance of arguments, unpleasant exchanges, encounters, etc.

Factor 3, Compromising, consisted of items showing negotiations, breaking of deadlocks, resolving differences to reach a solution that is acceptable to both parties.

Factor 4, Obliging, consisted of items showing concession for others, doing things the way others want, etc.

Factor 5, Dominating, consisted of items showing the use of authority, influence, and expertise to get one's way.

Although the present scale was varied from its original form (Rahim, 1983) in terms of rating scale and the criteria for retaining an item, not much substantial difference was observed. In fact, the factor analysis results revealed a similar structuring of factors. However, slight differences were apparent only in terms of the number of items, eigenvalues, and percentage of variance explained by each factor. In sum, the comparison of the Rahim and the present data in Table 2.4 recorded

Table 2.4

Comparisons of the Varimax Factor Loadings of this Study and the
Rahim (1983) Study*

| Item | This Study | | | | | Rahim's Study | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      | INT | AVO | COM | OBL | DOM | INT | AVO | COM | OBL | DOM |
| I try to work with my --- for a proper understanding of a problem | <u>39</u> | 13 | -02 | 02 | -04 | <u>60</u> | -02 | 03 | 03 | -01 |
| I collaborate with my --- to come up with decisions accepted to us | <u>33</u> | 04 | 19 | 21 | -05 | <u>49</u> | -05 | 11 | 14 | 04 |
| I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way | <u>54</u> | -04 | 16 | 07 | -10 | <u>58</u> | -12 | 01 | -06 | -00 |
| I exchange accurate information with my --- to solve a problem together | <u>69</u> | -02 | -08 | 03 | -14 | <u>61</u> | -07 | 01 | 10 | -01 |
| I try to work with my --- to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations | <u>61</u> | 02 | 02 | 01 | -08 | <u>56</u> | 01 | 07 | 08 | -07 |
| I try to integrate my ideas with those of my --- to come up with a decision jointly | <u>65</u> | -06 | 17 | 10 | 01 | <u>55</u> | 02 | 20 | 04 | -05 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I try to investigate into an issue with my --- to find a solution acceptable to us | _70_ | -03 | 07 | 10 | 03 | _53_ | -02 | 09 | 01 | -05 |
| I generally avoid an argument with my --- | -04 | _60_ | 23 | 01 | 05 | 02 | 36 | 08 | 16 | -11 |
| I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my --- | 11 | _66_ | -10 | 12 | -11 | 10 | _42_ | 06 | 16 | -00 |
| I try to keep my disagreement with my --- to myself in order to avoid hard feelings | -04 | _54_ | 10 | 11 | 00 | -05 | _61_ | 03 | 12 | 04 |
| I avoid an encounter with my --- | 08 | _65_ | 18 | 07 | 16 | -21 | _48_ | 08 | 25 | -03 |
| I try to stay away from disagreement with my --- | -12 | _57_ | 20 | 12 | 02 | -13 | _53_ | 09 | 22 | 00 |
| I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and try to keep my conflict with my --- to myself | -07 | _35_ | 13 | 07 | 23 | 05 | _60_ | 12 | 07 | 06 |
| I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with my --- | -05 | 24 | 00 | 08 | 15 | -09 | _58_ | 03 | 03 | -04 |
| I negotiate with my --- so that a compromise can be reached | 18 | 23 | _63_ | 15 | 07 | 14 | -03 | _49_ | 03 | 07 |

| Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I usually propose a middleground for breaking dead-lock | 08 | 10 | <u>85</u> | 08 | 01 | 07 | 07 | <u>82</u> | 06 | -00 |
| I try to play down our differences to reach a compromise | 12 | 20 | <u>59</u> | 12 | 08 | 08 | 22 | 39 | 08 | 06 |
| I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse | 12 | 02 | <u>47</u> | 15 | 17 | 06 | 14 | <u>59</u> | 16 | 02 |
| I give some to get some | 24 | 03 | 18 | 28 | 02 | 11 | 02 | 31 | 07 | 04 |
| I win some and I lose some | 18 | -10 | 14 | 29 | 03 | 03 | -01 | 18 | 13 | 09 |
| I use "give-and-take" so that a compromise can be made. | 25 | 15 | 04 | 30 | 07 | 14 | -04 | <u>50</u> | 09 | -00 |
| I usually allow concessions to my --- | 00 | 16 | 15 | <u>65</u> | 16 | 02 | 11 | 14 | <u>42</u> | 07 |
| I sometimes help my --- to make a decision in their favor | 14 | 12 | -00 | <u>57</u> | 10 | 27 | 02 | -01 | 27 | 21 |
| I give into the wishes of my --- | -02 | 18 | 24 | <u>60</u> | 01 | -13 | 26 | 09 | <u>59</u> | 06 |
| I usually accommodate the wishes of my --- | 21 | 08 | 14 | <u>50</u> | 02 | -02 | 11 | 18 | <u>68</u> | 11 |
| I generally try to satisfy the needs of my --- | 21 | 08 | 09 | 21 | 09 | 19 | 12 | 08 | <u>48</u> | -03 |
| I often go along with the suggestions of my --- | 13 | 03 | 12 | 19 | 07 | 14 | -03 | -03 | <u>42</u> | -02 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I try to satisfy the expectations of my --- | 25 | -02 | -01 | 26 | 00 | 14 | 06 | 02 | _57_ | 07 |
| I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation | -04 | 22 | 12 | 03 | _55_ | -03 | -03 | 02 | -02 | _64_ |
| I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue | 11 | 15 | -10 | -16 | _38_ | 12 | -06 | -03 | -02 | _44_ |
| I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor | 00 | 14 | -15 | -02 | _57_ | 00 | 04 | 01 | 11 | _54_ |
| I argue my case with my --- to show the merits of my position | 05 | -20 | 10 | 09 | _49_ | 07 | -06 | 04 | 06 | 33 |
| I use my authority to make a decision in my favor | -13 | -07 | 01 | 19 | _67_ | -12 | 01 | 02 | 01 | _69_ |
| I use my influence to get my ideas accepted | -03 | -00 | 21 | 01 | _69_ | -00 | -03 | 11 | 06 | _64_ |
| I usually hold on to my solution to a problem | -13 | 05 | 10 | 11 | _45_ | -15 | -13 | -02 | 02 | 32 |

-------------------------------------------------------------------

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Eigenvalue | 5.50 | 3.18 | 1.99 | 1.49 | 1.42 | 4.10 | 3.00 | 1.09 | 1.52 | 2.26 |
| % of variance | 33.7 | 19.5 | 12.2 | 9.2 | 8.7 | 30.5 | 22.4 | 8.2 | 11.4 | 16.9 |
| Number of items | 7 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 5 |

Note. N = 450; * The word "immediate subordinates" or "immediate superior" appeared in each blank space in Section I or Section III of the questionnaire; Decimal points are omitted in the factor loadings; INT = Integrating; AVO = Avoiding; COM = Compromising; OBL = Obliging; DOM = Dominating.

similar factor loadings for each of the 28 items. Similarity was found both in the scale loadings and in the magnitude of the factor loadings.

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's coefficients alpha, and intercorrelations of conflict handling styles for the combined data are presented in Table 2.5. It is important to note that all the five scales exhibited well over .50 reliability level suggested by Nunnally (1978). The reliability coefficients for Rahim's (1983) data, respectively, were .77, .75, .72, .72, .72 for integrating, avoiding, compromising, obliging, and dominating styles. These values are comparable to the coefficients alpha obtained in this study.

Table 2.5

Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Intercorrelations of Conflict Handling Styles (Combined)

| Style | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Integrating | 76 | | | | |
| 2. Avoiding | 08 | 78 | | | |
| 3. Compromising | 30[b] | 35[b] | 77 | | |
| 4. Obliging | 20[b] | 42[b] | 40[b] | 71 | |
| 5. Dominating | 05 | 12[b] | 23[b] | 17[b] | 71 |
| $\underline{M}$ | 37.60 | 27.05 | 16.82 | 16.87 | 26.31 |
| $\underline{SD}$ | 5.70 | 6.97 | 4.57 | 4.14 | 6.67 |

Note. Diagonal enteries indicate reliability coefficient; Decimal points in correlation matrix and alpha are omitted; $\underline{N}$ = 450; [b] $\underline{p}$ < .01.

Of the 10 correlations, eight were statistically significant. Nevertheless, the measures were found to be moderately intercorrelated, thereby suggesting a considerable non-overlapping variances among the subscales.

Descriptive statistics, coefficients alpha, and intercorrelations of conflict handling styles for immediate superior and immediate subordinates are presented in Table 2.6. The reliability coefficients in both cases were between .66 and .82 and intercorrelations ranged between .05 and .46.

Table 2.6

Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Intercorrelations of Conflict Handling Styles (for immediate superior and immediate subordinates)

| Styles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | $\underline{M}$ | $\underline{SD}$ | Alpha |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 1. INT | X | 07 | $27^b$ | $30^b$ | 08 | 37.8 | 5.9 | .66 |
| 2. AVO | 05 | X | $30^b$ | $25^b$ | 10 | 26.4 | 6.6 | .82 |
| 3. COM | $29^b$ | $33^b$ | X | $34^b$ | $18^b$ | 16.5 | 4.6 | .78 |
| 4. OBL | $26^b$ | $46^b$ | $43^b$ | X | $16^b$ | 15.9 | 4.0 | .66 |
| 5. DOM | -05 | $14^a$ | $30^b$ | 14 | X | 26.9 | 6.8 | .74 |
| $\underline{M}$ | 37.4 | 27.6 | 17.1 | 17.8 | 25.7 | | | |
| $\underline{SD}$ | 5.6 | 7.2 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 6.4 | | | |
| Alpha | .80 | .69 | .77 | .73 | .73 | | | |

Note. The matrix above the diagonal indicates conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates; the matrix below the diagonal indicates conflict handling styles with immediate superior. Decimal points in correlation matrix are omitted; $\underline{N}$ = 225; a $\underline{p}$ < .05; b $\underline{p}$ < .01; For abbreviations see Table 2.4.

In summary, it is evident that the conflict handling style scale measured the same constructs for the Indian population group, as originally intended by Rahim (1983)--a fact reflecting a partial evidence of the external validity.

## Personal Attributes Measure

The scale was composed of 20 items drawn from Steers and Braunstein's (1976) questionnaire of Behaviorally Based Measure of Manifest Needs in work settings (MNQ). The scale is based on the need theory of Murray (1968) and has been found to exhibit reasonable levels of convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity and high test-retest and internal consistency reliabilities. Results on this questionnaire have showed consistency with the theory as they related to job attitudes, performance, leadership attributes, etc. The MNQ measures four needs: achievement, autonomy, affiliation, and dominance. Five out of the twenty items had a reverse scoring.

The respondents were asked to rate on a 7-point scale ($1$ = never; $7$ = always) as to how frequently each of the statements most accurately described their behavior at work. Factor analysis results in the present study revealed three interpretable factors: achievement, independence (autonomy), and power (dominance). The three factors accounted for a total of 78.4% of the variance. Relationship did not emerge as an independent factor. Factor loadings are presented in Table 2.7.

The first factor was composed of items relating to goal-setting, improving performance, taking responsibility, etc. and

Table 2.7

Factor Loadings Obtained: Personal Attributes*

| Item | Factors | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|
|      | Ach | Ind | Pow |
| I try very hard to improve on my past performance | .60 | .01 | .05 |
| I try to avoid any added responsibilities on my job | .39 | -.28 | .02 |
| I do my best work when job assignments are fairly difficult | .53 | .13 | .02 |
| I try to perform better than my co-workers | .59 | .10 | .19 |
| I strive to gain more control over the events around me | .46 | .07 | .41 |
| I go my own way regardless of the opinion of others | .06 | .44 | .13 |
| In my work assignments, I try to be my own boss | .16 | .33 | .34 |
| I disregard rules and regulations that hamper my personal freedom | -.06 | .46 | .05 |
| I try my best to work alone on a job | .12 | .67 | .06 |
| I strive to be in command when I am working in a group | .04 | .17 | .75 |
| I seek an active role in the leadership of a group | .21 | .04 | .46 |
| Eigenvalue | 3.05 | .61 | .99 |
| % of Variance | 42.2 | 22.3 | 13.9 |

Note. Ach = Achievement. Ind = Independence, Pow = Power,
    * Additional data were obtained from Tandon and Lakhtakia
    (1989), thus making N = 444.

was named, Achievement.

The second factor was composed of items relating to work assignments, personal freedom, etc. and was named, Independence.

The third factor was composed of items relating to leadership, influence, and commanding others and was labeled, Power. Independence and power had two common items since they (items) loaded heavily on both factors.

Descriptive statistics, alphas, and intercorrelations of need factors are given in Table 2.8. As is evident, the reliability coefficients were well above the .50 level. For the present sample only ($N$ = 225), the alpha values were .63, .54, and .64, respectively, for achievement, independence, and power. Intercorrelations ranged between .17 and .52. (see Tables 2.13 and 2.14).

Table 2.8

Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Intercorrelations of Personal Attributes*

| Attribute | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----------|------|------|------|
| 1. Achievement | .66 | | |
| 2. Independence | .17[b] | .59 | |
| 3. Power | .52[b] | .44[b] | .67 |
| M | 27.8 | 14.8 | 19.8 |
| SD | 4.2 | 4.4 | 3.9 |

## Climate Measure

The concept of climate has evoked a myraid of controversies, unit of analysis being the main confusion: whether one is measuring psychological climate (perceived) or organizational climate (attributes of the organization as a whole). The unit of analysis forms the perceptual and structural approaches to the study of climate (e.g., Ansari, 1980; Ansari, Baumgartel, & Sullivan, 1982). Whereas some (e.g., Guion, 1973; James & Jones, 1974) question the validity of perceptual measures, others (e.g., Hellreigel & Slocum, 1974) favor them on the ground that objective characteristics only indirectly influence the organizational participants. For the present purpose, climate is defined as the attributes of the organization as perceived by the individual members.

The scale consisted of 20 items based on the Steers and Braunstein (1976) Manifest Need Questionnaire. The items were modified to enable respondents to assess the climate of their organization. Respondents were asked to rate on a 7-point scale (1 = to almost no extent; 7 = to a very great extent) the extent to which they considered each statement to be true to their organization. Factor analysis results constrained to three interpretable factors, explaining a total of 94.7% of the variance. Factor loadings obtained are reported in Table 2.9.

The first factor, Achievement, consisted of items showing

Table 2.9

Factor Loadings Obtained: Climate*

| Items | Factors | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|
|       | Ach | Ind | Pow |
| In this organization, there is a feeling of pressure to continually improve individual and group performance | .50 | .10 | .18 |
| This organization stimulates and approves of innovation and experimentation | .73 | .27 | .02 |
| In this organization, we set fairly high standards for performance | .67 | .24 | .12 |
| In this organization, it is up to us to decide how our job should best be done | .17 | .67 | .12 |
| In this organization, we are free to set our own performance goals | .10 | .70 | .09 |
| In this organization, there are opportunities for independent thoughts and actions on our jobs | .21 | .73 | -.09 |
| In this organization, we have a great deal of freedom to decide how we do our job. | .19 | .82 | -.02 |
| This organization prefers to be its own boss, even where it needs assistance, or where joint effort is required | .01 | -.05 | .58 |
| Status symbols are especially important for this organization and it uses them to gain influence over others | -.04 | -.02 | .57 |
| This organization provides a lot of power and control to upper level management. | .14 | .13 | .30 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eigenvalues | 6.33 | 1.31 | .94 |
| % of Variance | 69.8 | 14.5 | 10.4 |

---

Note. Ach = Achievement, Ind = Independence, Pow = Power;
* Additional data were obtained from Tandon and
Lakhtakia (1989), thus making $\underline{N}$ = 444.

the extent to which the organization was perceived to improve
individual and group performance, had high standards for
performance, etc.

The second factor, Independence, consisted of items showing
the extent to which the organization was perceived to provide
opportunities for independent thoughts and actions and the
freedom to decide how the job should be done.

Finally, the third factor, Power, consisted of items showing
the extent to which the organization was perceived to direct the
activities of its members, strive to be in command, etc.

Descriptive statistics, coefficients alpha, and
intercorrelations are depicted in Table 2.10. The reliability
coefficients, respectively, were .73, .85, and .47 for
achievement, independence, and power. For the present sample ($\underline{N}$
= 225), the reliability coefficients were .60, .82, and .45 for
the respective factors. Except for power, the other two factors
showed substantial reliability. The measures were found to be
moderately intercorrelated, thereby showing a great deal of non-
overlapping variances among the sub-scales. It is likely that
the reliability coefficient for power was low because this factor
had only three items (see Tables 2.13 and 2.14).

Table 2.10

Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Intercorrelations of Climate Factors*

| Factors | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Achievement | .73 | | |
| 2. Independence | .45[b] | .85 | |
| 3. Power | .14[a] | .03 | .47 |
| M | 13.2 | 16.4 | 13.6 |
| SD | 3.7 | 5.6 | 3.4 |

Note.    Diagonal enteries indicate reliability coefficients; * Additional data were obtained from Tandon and Lakhatakia (1989), thus making $\underline{N}$ = 444; a $\underline{p}$ < .05; b $\underline{p}$ <.01.

## Bases of Power Measure

Seven items constituted the bases of power measure, with each item referring to a particular power base. The items were drawn from the recent work by Hersey, Blanchard, and Natameyer (1979). Respondents were asked to tell why they responded to or complied with their immediate superior/subordinates. They were required to rate on a 7-point scale (1 = to almost no extent; 7 = to a very great extent) the extent to which each statement was true regarding their relationship with their immediate superior/immediate subordinates. Although single item measures lack psychometric properties, they have been used by a number of investigators to study bases of power, and the items have been shown to have concurrent and predictive validity in a number of

previous studies (e.g., Adler, 1983; Cobb, 1980; Martin & Hunt, 1980; Student, 1968).

Table 2.11

Factor Loadings Obtined: Bases of Power (Combined)

| Items | Factors | |
|---|---|---|
| | Organizational | Personal |
| They can put pressure on me by withholding their services in terms of strikes, lockouts, etc. (He/she can penalize or make things difficult for those who do not cooperate with him/her) | .50 | -.05 |
| They can give special help and benefits if I cooperate with them (He/she can give special help and benefits to those who cooperate with him/her) | .69 | -.09 |
| Their position in the organization provides them with the authority to restrict my work activities (He/she has the right, considering his/her position, to expect subordinates to do what he/she wants) | .69 | -.20 |
| They have some special knowledge and competence required for the job (He/she has some special knowledge and competence) | -.08 | .46 |
| They are likeable people (I like him/her personally and like to do things as he/she thinks they ought to be done | -.03 | .64 |
| Eigenvalue | 2.11 | .60 |
| % of Variance | 77.7 | 22.3 |

Note.    N = 450.

In a manner similar to conflict handling measures, the factor analysis for the bases of power measure was done thrice, that is, for immediate superior, immediate subordinates, and the combined data. The factor analysis results for the combined data are presented in Table 2.11. The analysis constrained to two interpretable factors. The coercive, reward, and legitimate bases of power were clustered to form the first factor namely, Organizational Power. Referent and expert bases of power clustered to form the second factor namely, Personal Power. The correlation between the two was .28. Organizational power had a mean of 3.32, an SD of 1.35, and a reliability coefficient of

reliability coefficient of .50.

Factor analysis of the other two contexts (superior/subordinate) showed a similar structuring of factors (see Tables 2.13 and 2.14). In the final analysis, connection and information power were also taken as separate factors considering their importance in the orgnizational setting (Ansari, in press; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970).

**Extent of Influence Measure**

The scale consisted of seven items assessing the extent to which one has influence over his immediate supeiror/immediate subordinates. Respondents were asked to judge on a 7-point scale (1 = to almost no extent; 7 = to a very great extent) the extent to which each statement was true to their relationship regarding their immediate superior/subordinates. Factor analysis for responses to immediate superior, subordinates, and for combined

data showed a similar structuring of factors. As expected, factor analysis results constrained to a single factor with an eigenvalue of 2.94. The combined data showed a mean of 33.49 and an SD of 7.10. The reliability coefficient for the combined data was .83. These values, respectively, were .80 and .79 in the superior and subordinate contexts (see Tables 2.13 and 2.14).

## Degree of Conflict Measure

A single item measure was used to assess the degree of conflict between the respondents and the target person. The respondents were asked to rate on a 7-point scale (1 = never; 7 = always) how frequently they had disagreements with their immediate superior/subordinates.

## Causes of Conflict Measure

The causes of conflict measure consisted of 5 items, with each referring to a potential source of conflict. The respondents were asked to rate on a 7-point scale (1 = never; 7 = always) the frequency with which each item had generally been a source of disagreement between them and their immediate superior/subordinates. The causes were: (i) clashes of values, beliefs, and interests, (ii) scarcity of resources, (iii) power incongruence, (iv) role expectations, and (v) role ambiquity.

## Personal Data Blank

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were measured by employing single-item scales. These items provided information regarding the respondents' age, education, tenure in present organization and position, designation, designation of

immediate superior, hierarchical level, salary, etc. Factor analysis results constrained to two interpretable factors, accounting for a total of 83.9% of the variance. The first factor included age, tenure in present organization, tenure in present position, and number of promotion. This was named, Seniority. The second factor included achieved success and income. This was named Success. Seniority had a mean of 13.04, an SD of 5.41, and an alpha of .72. These values, respectively, were 19.89, 5.76, and .77 for success. The factor analysis results are presented in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12

sector Loadings Obtained: Background Characteristics

| Items | Factors | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Seniority | Success |
| Age | .86 | .21 |
| Tenure in present position | .86 | .07 |
| Tenure in present organization | .47 | .20 |
| Number of promotions | .43 | .14 |
| Monthly Income | .28 | .95 |
| Achieved Success | -.05 | .96 |
| Eigenvalues | 2.74 | 1.45 |
| % of Variance | 54.9 | 29.0 |

Note. N = 225.

Descriptive statistics and coeffecients alpha of all the predictors are provided in Table 2.13 and intercorrelations are

Table 2.13

Descriptive Statistics, Scale Characteristics, and Reliability
Coefficients of Predictors

| Predictor | No of Items | M | SD | Alpha |
|-----------|-------------|---|----|-------|
| <u>CC</u> | | | | |
| C1 | 1 | 2.88 (3.24) | 1.49 (1.60) | * |
| C2 | 1 | 3.24 (3.31) | 1.36 (1.52) | * |
| C3 | 1 | 2.79 (3.37) | 1.49 (1.64) | * |
| C4 | 1 | 3.41 (3.88) | 1.38 (1.58) | * |
| C5 | 1 | 3.15 (3.53) | 1.74 (1.71) | * |
| <u>EI</u> | 7 | 36.42 (30.55) | 6.14 (6.78) | .80 .79 |
| <u>BP</u> | | | | |
| IN | 1 | 2.79 (4.71) | 1.65 (1.70) | * |
| CO | 1 | 2.00 (3.46) | 1.54 (1.97) | * |
| OR | 3 | 8.06 (11.86) | 3.00 (4.10) | .28 (.67) |
| PE | 2 | 8.34 (9.13) | 2.68 (2.76) | .45 (.64) |
| <u>PA</u> | | | | |
| PA | 5 | 27.85 | 4.22 | .63 |
| PI | 4 | 14.76 | 4.43 | .54 |
| PP | 4 | 19.80 | 3.97 | .64 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <u>CL</u> | ' | | | |
| CA | 3 | 13.16 | 3.70 | .60 |
| CI | 4 | 16.41 | 5.55 | .82 |
| CP | 3 | 13.63 | 3.37 | .45 |
| <u>DC</u> | 1 | 3.24<br>(3.42) | 1.09<br>(1.11) | * |
| <u>PD</u> | | | | |
| SR | 4 | 13.04 | 5.41 | .72 |
| SS | 2 | 19.89 | 5.76 | .77 |

<u>Note</u>. *Single item measures; Figures in parentheses indicate superior Context. Abbreviations: CC = Causes of Conflict; C1 = Clashes of Values, Beliefs, and Interests, C2 = Scarcity of Resources; C3 = Power Incongruence; C4 = Role Expectations; C5 = Role Ambiguity; EI = Extent of Influence; BP = Bases of Power; IN = Information; CO = Connection; OR = Organizational; PE = Personal; PC = Personal Characteristics; PA = Personal Achievement; PI = Personal Independence; PP = Personal Power; CL = Climate; CA = Achievement Oriented Climate; CI ≈ Independence Oriented Climate; CP = Power Oriented Climate; DC = Degree of Conflict; PD = Personal Data; SR = Seniority; SS = Success.

provided in Table 2.14. Tables clearly indicate that the factors are all within the range of acceptable reliability. It is also evident that correlation values are within the low-to-moderate range, an evidence of reasonable level of scale independence; that is, they do not appear to limit the subsequent analysis owing to multicollinearity.

Table 2.14

Intercorrelations of Predictors

| Factor | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CC |
| C1 | X | 36 | 48 | 40 | 62 | <u>14</u> | <u>17</u> | 15 | <u>01</u> | 27 | <u>01</u> | 13 | 08 | <u>28</u> | 13 | 08 | 30 | <u>11</u> | <u>13</u> |
| C2 | 16 | X | 41 | 31 | 38 | 02 | <u>03</u> | 13 | <u>05</u> | <u>01</u> | <u>02</u> | 09 | <u>09</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>01</u> | <u>04</u> | 15 | <u>11</u> | <u>13</u> |
| C3 | 24 | 32 | X | 51 | 67 | <u>14</u> | 12 | 28 | 12 | <u>14</u> | <u>02</u> | 22 | <u>06</u> | <u>24</u> | 19 | 16 | 25 | <u>06</u> | 09 |
| C4 | 27 | 25 | 41 | X | 69 | <u>21</u> | <u>09</u> | 16 | 07 | <u>12</u> | <u>11</u> | 19 | <u>03</u> | <u>34</u> | 31 | 13 | 26 | <u>11</u> | <u>13</u> |
| C5 | 14 | 32 | 40 | 50 | X | 23 | <u>14</u> | 18 | 02 | <u>21</u> | <u>05</u> | 18 | 05 | <u>32</u> | <u>29</u> | 17 | 28 | <u>12</u> | <u>14</u> |
| EI | <u>15</u> | 08 | 21 | 24 | 19 | X | 22 | <u>04</u> | 00 | 38 | 23 | <u>04</u> | 21 | 27 | 36 | <u>05</u> | <u>28</u> | 26 | 25 |
| BP |
| IN | 02 | 00 | 02 | 08 | 06 | <u>01</u> | X | 03 | 12 | 61 | 02 | 08 | 01 | <u>13</u> | <u>13</u> | 19 | <u>12</u> | <u>09</u> | <u>14</u> |
| CO | 06 | 07 | 27 | 28 | 14 | <u>20</u> | 13 | X | 47 | 15 | 18 | <u>01</u> | 07 | 23 | 11 | <u>04</u> | 02 | <u>07</u> | 00 |
| OR | 09 | 03 | 23 | 28 | 13 | <u>17</u> | 31 | 44 | X | 27 | 09 | 21 | 15 | 06 | <u>14</u> | 29 | <u>07</u> | <u>01</u> | 05 |
| PE | <u>12</u> | <u>06</u> | 06 | 04 | <u>02</u> | 14 | 27 | 13 | 21 | X | 19 | 09 | 13 | 20 | 08 | 01 | <u>25</u> | 11 | 05 |
| PA |
| PA | <u>14</u> | 01 | <u>16</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>15</u> | 33 | <u>08</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>09</u> | 01 | X | 02 | 61 | 25 | 03 | 12 | <u>14</u> | 18 | 05 |
| PI | 16 | 20 | 20 | 13 | 19 | <u>14</u> | 19 | 04 | 11 | 07 | 02 | X | 40 | 00 | <u>07</u> | 14 | 07 | <u>26</u> | <u>27</u> |
| PP | <u>01</u> | <u>02</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>07</u> | <u>02</u> | 29 | <u>01</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>05</u> | 04 | 50 | 40 | X | 19 | 07 | 11 | 05 | 03 | 02 |
| CL |
| CA | <u>15</u> | <u>04</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>12</u> | 32 | <u>03</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>07</u> | <u>09</u> | 25 | 00 | 20 | X | 43 | 02 | <u>21</u> | 09 | 08 |
| CI | <u>01</u> | <u>09</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>08</u> | <u>09</u> | 23 | <u>03</u> | <u>06</u> | 01 | <u>02</u> | 03 | <u>07</u> | 07 | 43 | X | <u>03</u> | <u>11</u> | 07 | 12 |
| CP | <u>07</u> | 02 | 07 | <u>01</u> | 02 | <u>03</u> | 15 | 07 | 02 | 06 | 12 | 14 | 11 | 02 | <u>03</u> | X | <u>02</u> | <u>01</u> | 00 |
| DC | 24 | 04 | 00 | 16 | 12 | <u>18</u> | 01 | 12 | 12 | 07 | <u>09</u> | 06 | 01 | 01 | 10 | 04 | X | <u>13</u> | <u>12</u> |
| PD |
| SR | <u>04</u> | <u>06</u> | 02 | 03 | <u>19</u> | 13 | <u>09</u> | 07 | 09 | 10 | 08 | <u>26</u> | 03 | 09 | 07 | <u>01</u> | <u>06</u> | X | 27 |
| SS | <u>05</u> | <u>05</u> | <u>04</u> | <u>02</u> | <u>21</u> | 17 | <u>14</u> | 02 | 01 | 08 | 05 | <u>27</u> | 02 | 08 | 12 | 00 | <u>05</u> | 32 | X |

Note.  $N$ = 225; $r$ = (223) = .13 at $p$ < .05; $r$ = (223) = .16 at $p$ < .01; underlined Figures are negative correlations;  For abbreviations see Table 2.13.

## The Procedure

The organizations were requested to grant permission for data collection. The personnel departments were contacted to provide a list of managers representing the lower and middle levels of management. The questionnaires were administered during working hours and were collected at the convenience of the managers. The managers were personally contacted and detailed instructions, written and verbal, regarding how to fill-in the questionnaire were given. Stressing the importance of frank and sincere responses, the managers were assured complete anonymity. On the average, the respondents took about 45 minutes in filling out the questionnaire.

## Statistical Analyses

Some preliminary analyses were done for examining the psychometric properties of the measures. Depending on the nature of the measure, the analyses mainly included factor analysis and coefficients alpha. In addition, descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were computed.

As stated earlier, the study aimed at examining the conflict handling styles in relation to the various proposed variables. To meet this objective, the direct effects of the different sets of predictors and their interaction effects on the use of handling styles were examined. Several sets of stepwise multiple regression analysis were computed to examine the direct relationships.

The major interaction hypothesis was tested by using a

series of hierarchical multiple regression analysis (Nie et al., 1975), thus avoiding the problems involved in using difference scores (Wall & Payne, 1973). For each interaction pair, scores were converted to $z$ scores and then a product term was formed. For the hypothesis to be tested, the <u>beta</u> weight of the product term should be significant. The regression coefficients were tested through the application of $F$ ratio. Instead of determining the incremental contribution of each variable by assuming it was added last, the hierarchical method requires that the researcher specify the order of inclusion. Variables were added in single steps, and the increment in the explained sum of squares at each step was taken as the component of variation attributable to the particular variable added on that step. The formulae for computing the $F$'s are somewhat different from those employed in the standard multiple regression analysis (see Nie et al., 1975). Significant interactions were then analyzed graphically. Following Hunt, Osborn, and Larson (1975), lines with $\pm$ one standard deviation from the means were plotted. While plotting the interaction curves, the mean scores were each divided by the number of items in order to maintain consistency across figures. All statistical analyses were performed using the <u>SPSS</u> manual (Nie, et al., 1975).

# Chapter 3

## RESULTS

This chapter presents the various analyses performed for assessing the relationships between the various sets of predictors and conflict handling styles. The results appear in four major sections. Section 1 deals with the use of conflict handling styles as a function of the job status of the target. Section 2 deals with the direct relationships of predictors with conflict handling styles. Section 3 deals with the interaction effects of the various combinations of predictors on the use of conflict handling styles. Section 4 deals with the relationship of respondents' background characteristics and organizational characteristics with handling styles. Since the present study focuses on interpersonal conflict in work settings, the results for each correlate are further organized into two subheads: results regarding the use of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates and results regarding the use of handling styles with immediate superior.

### Job Status and Conflict Handling Styles

Though comparison of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior apparently showed some differences, the differences were not statistically significant. This suggests that respondents use more or less the same styles with the two groups of target.

## Direct Relationships

Results concerning the direct relationships are primarily based on the stepwise multiple regression analysis. The analyses show the link of conflict handling styles with personal attributes, organizational climate, bases of power, and causes of conflict. Zero-order correlations between predictors and criterion variables are presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. The sets of predictors examined in this study appear below.

### Personal Attributes

Personality variables are the core factors from which various behavioral manifestations germinate. These variables are relevant to the understanding of conflict handling styles adopted by individuals. The personal attributes in this study include three need dimensions--achievement, independence, and power. The main focus has been on examining the contribution of these personal attributes to the use of conflict handling styles varying with the status of the target person: immediate subordinates and superior.

**Subordinates**. Table 3.3 depicts the multiple regression analysis results of personality factors and conflict handling styles with subordinates. As is evident, need for achievement appeared to be the best predictor for the use of integrating style of handling conflict. Need for independence also contributed significantly but negtively to the use of this style. Taken together, the two factors accounted for a total of 18% of the variance.

Table 3.1

Zero-order Correlations of Conflict Handling Styles (with Subordinates) with Predictors

| Predictors | INT | AVO | COM | OBL | DOM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CC | | | | | |
| C1 | -16 | -02 | 10 | 04 | 03 |
| C2 | 01 | 07 | -03 | 14 | -01 |
| C3 | -10 | 14 | 10 | 17 | -01 |
| C4 | -09 | 03 | 14 | 09 | 01 |
| C5 | -12 | 03 | 01 | 00 | 09 |
| EI | 27 | 12 | -04 | -08 | 08 |
| BP | | | | | |
| IN | -06 | 02 | 15 | 09 | 14 |
| CO | 09 | 15 | 20 | 24 | 17 |
| OR | 09 | 15 | 22 | 18 | 08 |
| PE | 23 | 09 | 13 | 15 | -00 |
| PC | | | | | |
| PA | 40 | 06 | -03 | 05 | -01 |
| PI | -12 | 03 | -04 | 21 | 26 |
| PP | 15 | -01 | -05 | -02 | 32 |
| CL | | | | | |
| CA | 15 | 00 | -05 | -07 | -08 |
| CI | 25 | -20 | -09 | -07 | -01 |
| CP | 08 | 21 | 04 | 19 | 11 |
| DC | 09 | -04 | 02 | 09 | 05 |
| PD | | | | | |
| SR | 18 | 06 | 18 | -05 | 00 |
| SS | 15 | 00 | 11 | -08 | -02 |

Note.    $N$ = 225;   $r$ (223) = .13  at $p$ < .05;   $r$ (223) = .16 at $p$ <.01.    Decimal  points  are  omitted.    INT = Integrating; AVO = Avoiding; COM = Compromising; OBL = Obliging;  DOM = Dominating.    For other abbreviations see Table 2.13.

Table 3.2

Zero-order   Correlations   of   Conflict   Handling   Styles   (with
Superior) with Predictors

| Predictors | INT | AVO | COM | OBL | DOM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CC | | | | | |
| C1 | -09 | 03 | 09 | 08 | 17 |
| C2 | -01 | 00 | 07 | 08 | 20 |
| C3 | -12 | 10 | 15 | 18 | 23 |
| C4 | -13 | 11 | 08 | 11 | 12 |
| C5 | 06 | 16 | 10 | 10 | 16 |
| EI | 39 | 04 | 15 | 11 | 25 |
| BP | | | | | |
| IN | 14 | 13 | 09 | 06 | 06 |
| CO | 03 | 31 | 18 | 34 | 18 |
| OR | 08 | 36 | 20 | 46 | 18 |
| PE | 31 | 22 | 16 | 16 | 07 |
| PC | | | | | |
| PA | 49 | 22 | 20 | 16 | 11 |
| PI | -01 | 12 | 03 | 19 | 36 |
| PP | 27 | 16 | 07 | 16 | 39 |
| CL | | | | | |
| CA | 37 | 06 | 11 | 06 | 02 |
| CI | 32 | -18 | -02 | -06 | 12 |
| CP | 12 | 23 | 05 | 24 | 12 |
| DC | -06 | -02 | 10 | 02 | 15 |
| PD | | | | | |
| SR | 19 | 00 | 12 | -01 | 01 |
| SS | 17 | -06 | 05 | -09 | 01 |

Note.     $\underline{N}$ = 225; $\underline{r}$ (223) = .13 at $\underline{p}$ < .05; $\underline{r}$ (223) = .16 at $\underline{p}$ <
.01.   Decimal point are omitted.   For abbreviations see
Tables 2.13 and 3.1.

Table 3.3

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Personal Attributes (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables) with Immediate Subordinates

| Style | Personal Attributes | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| Integrating | | | |
| R | .40 | .42 | * |
| $R^2$ Change | .16 | .02 | * |
| Beta | .40[b] | -.13[a] | * |
| Order | 1 | 2 | * |
| Avoiding | | | |
| R | .06 | .09 | .08 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .10 | .06 | -.09 |
| Order | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Compromising | | | |
| R | .06 | .06 | .05 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | -.01 | -.03 | -.03 |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Obliging | | | |
| R | .27 | .21 | .24 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .04 | .01 |
| Beta | .16[a] | .30[b] | -.22[b] |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Order | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| **Dominating** | | | |
| $R$ | .37 | .39 | .32 |
| $R^2$ Change | .04 | .01 | .10 |
| Beta | -.20 [b] | .11 | .37 [b] |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Note.    $N = 225$; a $p < .05$; b $p < .01$; * Tolerance level insufficient for further computation.

The obliging style was significantly predicted by all the three need factors--achievement, independence, and power (with the third predictor showing a negative impact on this style)-- explaining a total of 7% of the variance.

Need for power emerged as the best predictor for the use of dominating style (10% of the variance). Need for achievement also contributed significantly but negatively to this style by adding 4% of the variance, thus making a total of 14% of the variance.

The avoiding and compromising styles of handling conflict were unrelated to either personal attribute.

**Superior**.    Table 3.4 depicts the multiple regression analysis results of personal attributes and conflict handling styles with immediate superior. Need for achievement was found to be the single best predictor for the use of integrating style, accounting for a total of 24% of the variance.

Table 3.4

Stepwise    Multiple    Regression    Analysis    Results--Personal
Attributes  (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles  (Criterion
Variables) with Immediate Superior

| Style | Personal Attributes | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| **Integrating** | | | |
| R | .49 | .49 | .49 |
| $R^2$ Change | .24 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .46[b] | -.05 | .06 |
| Order | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| **Avoiding** | | | |
| R | .22 | .25 | * |
| $R^2$ Change | .05 | .01 | * |
| Beta | .22[b] | .11 | * |
| Order | 1 | 2 | * |
| **Compromising** | | | |
| R | .20 | .21 | .20 |
| $R^2$ Change | .04 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .24[b] | .06 | -.08 |
| Order | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| **Obliging** | | | |
| R | .25 | .19 | .25 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .04 | .00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beta | .13 | .18[a] | .01 |
| Order | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| **Dominating** | | | |
| R | .45 | .45 | .39 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .05 | .15 |
| Beta | -.06 | .22[b] | .33[b] |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Note. $N$ = 225; a $p$ < .05; b $p$ < .01; * Tolerance level insufficient for further computation.

The avoiding and compromising styles were each predicted only by need for achievement, explaining a total of 5% and 4% of the variance, respectively. Need for independence emerged as the single best predictor for the obliging style, accounting for a total of 4% of the variance.

The dominating style was predicted by two need variables-- power and independence--explaining a total of 20% of the variance.

## Climate

Use of conflict handling styles is also expected to be a function of the climate of the organization, of which the individual is a part. The focus here is on the perceived climate of the organization. As mentioned earlier (Chapter 2), the factor analysis results of climate factors revealed a structuring similar to that of need factors. Accordingly, the climate of the organization includes three factors: achievement, independence,

and power.

**Subordinates**. The multiple regression analysis results appear in Table 3.5. Independence oriented climate emerged as the only significant predictor for the use of the integrating style, explaining a total of 6% of the variance.

The avoiding style was significantly predicted by two climates--power and independence--the latter having a negative impact. These factors jointly accounted for a total of 8% of the variance.

The power climate alone explained a total of 3% of the variance in predicting the use of obliging style.

The compromising and dominating styles were unrelated to any of the climate factors.

**Superior**. Multiple regression analysis results appear in Table 3.6. Climates of achievement and independence contributed significantly to the use of integrating style. Taken together, they accounted for a total of 17% (14% and 3%, respectively) of the variance.

The avoiding style was significantly predicted by all the three factors--power (5% of the variance), independence (3% of the variance), and achievement (3% of the variance)--the second factor having a negative impact.

Power climate emerged as a significant predictor for the obliging style, accounting for a total of 6% of the variance.

Table 3.5

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Climate
(Predictora) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables)
with Immediate Subordinates

| Style | Climate Factors | | |
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Integrating | | | |
| $R$ | .27 | .25 | .26 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .06 | .01 |
| Beta | .05 | .23 [b] | .08 |
| Order | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Avoiding | | | |
| $R$ | .30 | .29 | .21 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .04 | .04 |
| Beta | .10 | -.24 [b] | .20 [b] |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Compromising | | | |
| $R$ | .10 | .09 | .10 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .01 | .00 |
| Beta | -.01 | -.08 | .03 |
| Order | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Obliging | | | |
| $R$ | .21 | .21 | .19 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .00 | .03 |

|  |  | b |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beta | -.08 | -.03 | .19$^b$ |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Dominating

| R | .14 | .14 | .11 |
|---|---|---|---|
| R$^2$ Change | .01 | .00 | .01 |
| Beta | -.10 | .03 | .11 |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Note. N = 225; a p < .05; b p < .01.

Independence climate predicted the use of dominating style, explaining just 1% of variance.

The compromising style was unrelated to any climate factors.

## Bases of Power

Bases of power play an important role in predicting the way an individual resolves conflict at the interpersonal level. The emphasis here is on the perceived bases of power of the target person. Four bases of power as predictors are examined. They are connection, information, organizational, and personal power.

**Subordinates**. As is evident from Table 3.7, personal power best predicted the use of integrating style, explaining 5% of the variance. The information base entered on the second step and added 2% of the variance to this style (but it had a negative beta weight).

Connection base of power appeared as a single best predictor for the use of obliging style (6% of the variance).

Table 3.6

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Climate (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables) with Immediate Superior

| Style | Climate Factors | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| **Integrating** | | | |
| R | .37 | .41 | .43 |
| $R^2$ Change | .14 | .03 | .01 |
| Beta | .28[b] | .20[b] | .12 |
| Order | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| **Avoiding** | | | |
| R | .32 | .28 | .23 |
| $R^2$ Change | .03 | .03 | .05 |
| Beta | .16[a] | -.24[b] | .22[b] |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Compromising** | | | |
| R | .11 | .13 | .14 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .13 | -.08 | .04 |
| Order | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| **Obliging** | | | |
| R | .25 | .26 | .24 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .06 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beta | .08 | -.08 | .24 [b] |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 |

**Dominating**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .18 | .17 | .12 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .01 | .01 |
| Beta | -.05 | .14 [a] | .13 |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Note. $N = 225$; a $p < .05$; b $p < .01$.

The dominating style was significantly and positively predicted by connection (3%) and information (1%) bases of power, explaining a total of 4% of the variance.

The avoiding and compromising styles were not significantly related to any of the bases of power.

**Superior**. Table 3.8 shows the multiple regression analysis results of bases of power and conflict handling styles. The integrating style was significantly predicted by the personal base of power, explaining a total of 9% of the variance.

Personal power along with connection power significantly predicted the use of avoiding style. Taken together, the two bases of power explained a total of 15% of the variance.

The obliging style was significantly predicted by organizational power (21% of the variance) followed by connection power (2% of the variance), thus contributing to a total of 23% of the variance.

Bases of power failed to predict significantly the use of compromising and dominating styles.

Table 3.7

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Bases of Power (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables) with Immediate Subordinates

| Style | Bases of Power | | | |
| | CO | IN | OR | PE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Integrating | | | | |
| R | .28 | .27 | .28 | .23 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .02 | .01 | .05 |
| Beta | .05 | -.16[a] | .06 | .26[b] |
| Order | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Avoiding | | | | |
| R | .15 | .19 | .17 | .18 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .00 | .01 | .00 |
| Beta | .10 | -.04 | .10 | .07 |
| Order | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Compromising | | | | |
| R | .25 | .26 | .22 | .27 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .01 | .05 | .00 |
| Beta | .13 | .07 | .12 | .07 |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 |

## Obliging

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .24 | .27 | .27 | .26 |
| $R^2$ Change | .06 | .00 | .00 | .01 |
| Beta | .19[b] | .01 | .06 | .10 |
| Order | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

## Dominating

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .17 | .20 | .21 | .21 |
| $R^2$ Change | .03 | .01 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .16[a] | .14[a] | -.02 | -.06 |
| Order | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 |

Note.    $\underline{N}$ = 225;    a $\underline{p}$ < .05; b $\underline{p}$ < .01; CO = Connection; IN = Information; OR = Organizational; PE = Personal.

## Causes of Conflict

Five causes of conflict are examined in this study: clashes of values, beliefs, and interests; scarcity of resources; power incongruence; role expectations; and role ambiguity. These causes may be expected to contribute to the manner in which an individual resolves conflict.

**Subordinates**. Multiple regression analysis results appear in Table 3.9. Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was the best negative predictor for the use of integrating style. This cause explained 2% of the variance.

Power incongruence as a cause predicted the use of avoiding style, accounting for a total of 2% of the variance. This cause also predicted the use of obliging style (3% of the variance).

Table 3.8

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis--Bases of Power (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables) with Immediate Superior

| Style | Bases of Power | | | |
| | CO | IN | OR | PE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Integrating** | | | | |
| R | .32 | .30 | .32 | .31 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .00 | .00 | .09 |
| Beta | -.10 | -.04 | .04 | .34[b] |
| Order | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| **Avoiding** | | | | |
| R | .40 | .42 | .42 | .36 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .00 | .02 | .13 |
| Beta | .18[b] | .05 | .11 | .24[b] |
| Order | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| **Compromising** | | | | |
| R | .25 | .25 | .20 | .23 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .00 | .04 | .01 |
| Beta | .11 | .02 | .12 | .10 |
| Order | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| **Obliging** | | | | |
| R | .48 | .48 | .45 | .48 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .00 | .21 | .00 |
| Beta | .16[a] | -.01 | .37[b] | .04 |

| | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Order | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| <u>Dominating</u> | | | | | |
| R | | .18 | .21 | .21 | .22 |
| R2 | Change | .03 | .00 | .01 | .00 |
| Beta | | .13 | .05 | .11 | -.01 |
| Order | | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 |

<u>Note</u>.  $\underline{N}$ = 225;  a $\underline{p}$ < .05;  b $\underline{p}$ < .01;  CO = Connection;  IN = Information;  OR = Organizational;  PE = Personal.

These causes did not predict significantly the use of compromising and dominating styles.

**Superior**.  Multiple regression analysis results appear in Table 3.10.  Role ambiguity appeared to be the best predictor for the use of avoiding style (2% of the variance).

The obliging style was significantly predicted by power incongruence (3% of the variance).

Power incongruence also predicted the use of dominating style (5% of the variance).

The integrating and compromising styles were not significantly predicted by any causes of conflict.

### Interaction Effects

The hierarchical multiple regression analysis method was employed to examine the interaction effects of the various combinations of predictors and their contributions to the use of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates and superior.

Table 3.9

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Causes of Conflict
(Predictors) and  Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion  Variables)
with Immediate Subordinates

| Style | Causes of Conflict | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Clashes of values, Beliefs, and interest | Scarcity of Re- sources | Power Incon- gruence | Role Expecta- tions | Role Am- biguity |
| **Integrating** | | | | | |
| R | .16 | .19 | .20 | * | .18 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .00 | .00 | * | .00 |
| Beta | -.14 [a] | .08 | -.06 | * | -.10 |
| Order | 1 | 3 | 4 | * | 2 |
| **Avoiding** | | | | | |
| R | .15 | .16 | .14 | .16 | .16 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .02 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | -.06 | .05 | .16 [a] | -.02 | -.03 |
| Order | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| **Compromising** | | | | | |
| R | .17 | .16 | .18 | .14 | .20 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 | .02 | .00 |
| Beta | .07 | -.08 | .09 | .12 | -.08 |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

Obliging

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .22 | .19 | .17 | .22 | .21 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .01 | .03 | .00 | .01 |
| Beta | -.01 | .12 | .16[a] | .07 | -.13 |
| Order | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 |

Dominating

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .10 | .12 | .10 | .12 | .09 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .04 | -.03 | .05 | -.05 | .14[a] |
| Order | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 |

Note. N = 225; a $p$ < .05; b $p$ < .01; * Tolerance level insufficient for further computation.

Table 3.10

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Causes of Conflict (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables) with Immediate Superior

| Style | Causes of Conflict | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Clashes of Values, beliefs, and interest | Scarcity of Resources | Power Incongruence | Role Expectation | Role Ambiguity |

Integrating

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .17 | .18 | .14 | .13 | .16 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 | .02 | .00 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beta | -.07 | .05 | -.09 | -.12 | .11 |
| Order | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 |

Avoiding

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .18 | .17 | .18 | * | .16 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .00 | .00 | * | .02 |
| Beta | -.07 | -.07 | .05 | * | .19[a] |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 4 | * | 1 |

Compromising

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .15 | * | .15 | .15 | .15 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | * | .02 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | .02 | * | .13 | -.01 | .02 |
| Order | 2 | * | 1 | 4 | 3 |

Obliging

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | * | .18 | .18 | .18 | .18 |
| $R^2$ Change | * | .00 | .03 | .00 | .00 |
| Beta | * | .01 | .17[a] | .04 | .00 |
| Order | * | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Dominating

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $R$ | .27 | .26 | .23 | .27 | * |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .01 | .05 | .00 | * |
| Beta | .06 | .12 | .16[a] | -.02 | * |
| Order | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | * |

Note. $N$ = 225; a $p$ < .05; b $p$ < .01; * Tolerance level insufficient for further computation.

## Personal Attributes by Climate Interactions

The first set of predictors examined are the personal attributes of the respondents and the perceived climate of the organization. As mentioned earlier (Chapter 2), there was a match between personal factors and those of the climate. Thus the interaction of achievement, independence, and power pairs (person-climate) were studied in relation to conflict handling styles. Out of ninety interaction pairs, eight were significant for the subordinates and six for the superior, resulting in a total of fourteen significant interactions. The following pages present the contribution of these interactions to the use of conflict handling styles. The order of inclusion of each predictor entering the equation was predetermined to enable the personal variables to enter on the first step followed by climate on the second step. Finally, the interaction terms entered. The results appear under two subheads: conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior.

**Subordinates**. The regression results of the effects of personality by climate interactions on the use of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates are summarized in Table 3.11. Significant interactions are portrayed on Figure 3.1.

In a high power oriented climate, respondents with low independence orientation used the integrating style more frequently, whereas those with high independence orientation used this style less frequently. Additionally, low power oriented climate made no significant difference in the use of this style

as a function of independence orientation (Figure 3.1a).

Table 3.11

Significant Interactions Between Personal Attributes and Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Personal Attributes | Climate Factors | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| Achievement | * | * | * |
| Independence | AVO (.14; .02) | OBL (.13; .02) | INT (-.13; .02) |
| | OBL (.16; .02) | | OBL (-.16; .02) |
| Power | AVO (.16; .02) | * | OBL (-.20; .04) |
| | | | DOM (.12; .02) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; INT = Integrating; AVO = Avoiding; COM = Compromising; OBL = Obliging; DOM = Dominating.

In a low achievement oriented climate, respondents scoring low on independence used the avoiding style more frequently, whereas those high on independence used this style less frequently. In a high achievement oriented climate, those high on independence used this style more frequently than those low on independence (Figure 3.1b).

Similarly, the avoiding style was used more often in a low achievement oriented climate by executives low on power need and

less often by those high on power orientation (Figure 3.1c).

The obliging style was used more frequently by respondents high on independence in a low power oriented climate and less frequently in a high power oriented climate. However, low and high independence oriented respondents did not differ significantly in the use of this style in a high power oriented climate (Figure 3.1d).

In a high achievement oriented climate, respondents high on independence were more obliging than those low on independence orientation. Low achievement oriented climate did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between high and low independence oriented executives (Figure 3.1e).

The obliging style was used more frequently either by high power-oriented executives in a low power-oriented climate or by those low power-oriented executives in a high power oriented climate. The converse was also true--thereby indicating a non-existence of main effects (Figure 3.1f).

The obliging style was also used more frequently by respondents high on independence orientation in a high independence oriented climate and less often in a low independence oriented climate (Figure 3.1g).

In a high power oriented climate, respondents high on power orientation employed the dominating style more often as compared to those low on power orientation (Figure 3.1h).

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior are summarized in Table 3.12 and significant

Figure 3.1. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate subordinates as a function of personal attributes and climate. Abbreviation: LO = Low; HI = High; PI = Personal Independence; PP = Personal Power; PA = Personal Achievement; CI = Independence Oriented Climate; CP = Power Oriented Climate; CA = Achievement Oriented Climate.

Table 3.12

Significant Interactions Between Personal Attributes and Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Personal Attributes | Climate Factors | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Achievement | Independence | Power |
| Achievement | INT (-.11; .01) COM (-.13; .02) DOM (-.22; .05) OBL (-.15; .02) | * | * |
| Independence | * | OBL (.13; .02) | * |
| Power | DOM (-.13; .02) | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

climate, respondents high on power need used this style more frequently as compared to those low on this need (Figure 3.2e).

Similarly, dominating style was used more frequently in a low achievement oriented climate by respondents high on achievement and less frequently by those low on this need. However, high achievement oriented climate did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of this style between high and low achievement oriented executives (Figure 3.2f).
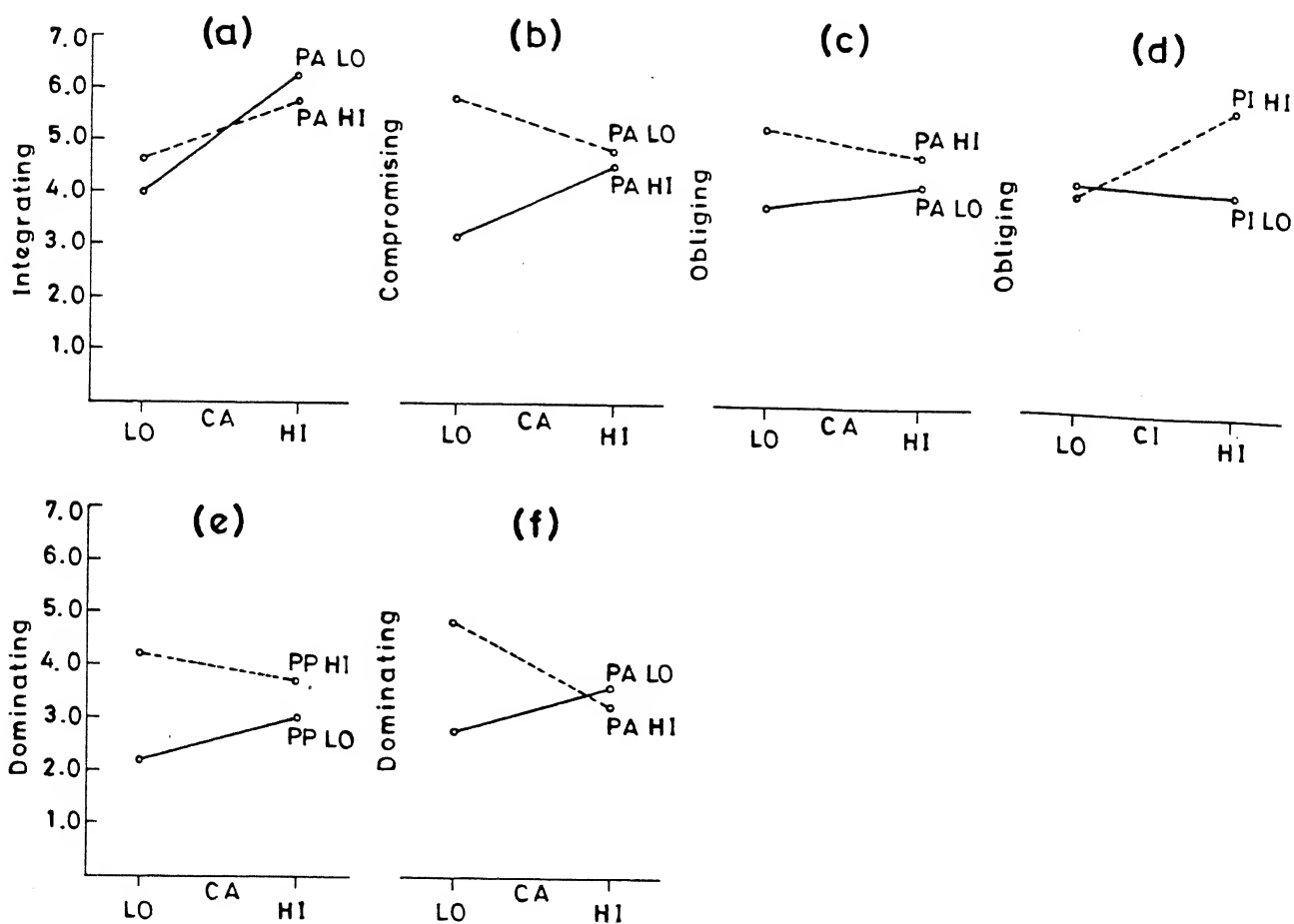
Figure 3.2.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate superior as a function of personal attributes and climate.   For abbreviations, see Figure 3.1.

## Personal Attributes by Bases of Power Interactions

The internal disposition of the individual when combined with the perceived bases of power of the target may be a potential determinant of the use of conflict handling styles. Under this head is examined the contribution of the interactions between personal attributes and bases of power to the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. The order of inclusion of each predictor entering the regression equation was determined in such a way that personal attributes entered on the first step followed by bases of power on the next step, and lastly the interaction terms were allowed to enter. Out of one hundred twenty interactions, thirteen were statistically significant for subordinates and three for superior.

**Subordinates**. The regression results of conflict handling styles appear in Table 3.13. Only eight significant interactions for illustrative purposes are shown in Figure 3.3. When the targets had high information power, respondents high on power orientation used the integrating style more frequently, whereas those low on this need used this style less frequently. However, the targets' low information power made no significant difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented respondents (Figure 3.3a).

When the targets' personal power was perceived to be low, respondents high on achievement orientation used the integrating style more frequently as compared to those low on this need.

Table 3.13

Significant Interactions Between Personal Attributes and Bases of Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Bases of Power | Personal Attributes | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Information | INT (.14; .02) | * | AVO (-.26; .07) |
| | | | OBL (-.14; .02) |
| Connection | | OBL (-.33; .02) | * |
| | DOM (-.16; .02) | COM (-.33; .02) | |
| | | DOM (-.51; .04) | |
| Organizational | AVO (-.14; .02) | * | AVO (-.17; .03) |
| Personal | * | DOM (-.37; .02) | AVO (-.16; .02) |
| | | INT (-.30; .02) | COM (-.17; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

When the targets' organizational power was high, respondents low on power orientation used the avoiding style more frequently as compared to those high on this need (Figure 3.3b).

The avoiding style was used more often either by low independence oriented executives when the targets had high personal power or by those high on independence orientation when the targets' personal power was low.  However, the main effects of either predictor appeared to be nonsignificant (Figure 3.3c).

Respondents low on independence orientation used the avoiding style more frequently when organizational power was high and less frequently when the targets' organizational power was low.  However, the perceived organizational power (high or low) was unrelated to high independence orientation.

Similarly, executives low on independence orientation used the avoiding style more often when the targets' information power was high and less often when information power was low.

When the targets' personal power was perceived to be high, respondents low on independence orientation used the compromising style more frequently, whereas those low on this need used this style less frequently.  The main effects of personal independence and power appeared to be negligible (Figure 3.3d).

Respondents low on achievement orientation used the compromising style more frequently when the targets' connection power was high and less frequently when the connection power was low.  Similarly, when the targets' connection power was high, respondents low on need for power used the compromising style more often than those high on this need.  The converse was also true--thus indicating the non-existence of main effects.

When the targets' information power was low, respondents
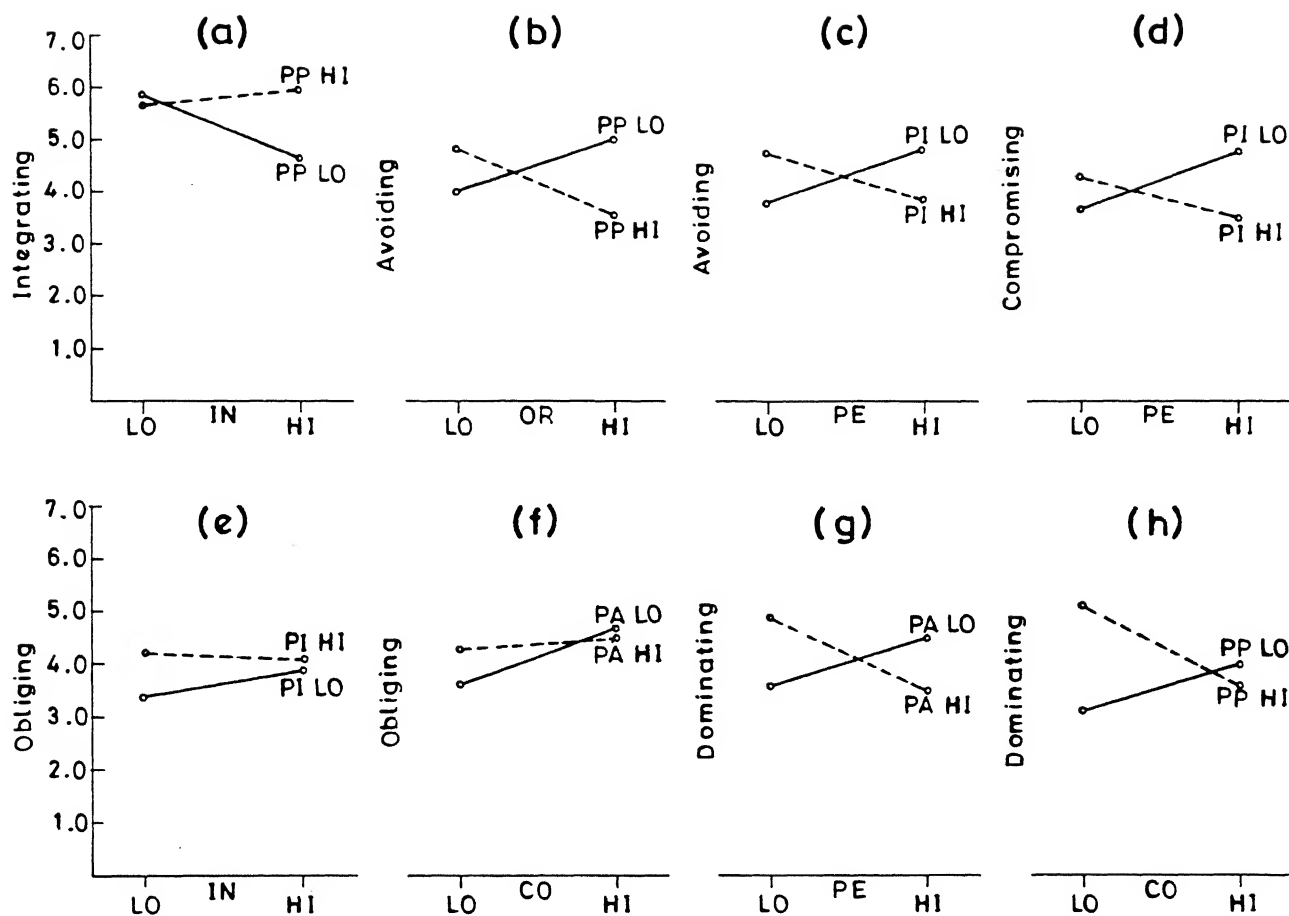
Figure 3.3.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate subordinates as a function of personal attributes and bases of power. Abbreviation: IN = Information Power; OR = Organizational Power; PE = Personal Power; CO = Connection Power; For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.1.

high on independence orientation used the obliging style more frequently, and less frequently when respondents were low on this need. But the high and the low independence orientation did not differ significantly in terms of the use of obliging style when the targets' information power was high (Figure 3.3e).

Respondents low on achievement orientation used the obliging style more often when the targets' connection power was high, and less often when the connection power was perceived to be low. High connection power did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between those low and high on this need (Figure 3.3f).

The dominating style was significantly predicted by the personality-power base interactions. The dominating style was used more frequently by executives high on achievement orientation when the targets' personal power was low, and less frequently by low achievement oriented executives when the targets' personal power was high. The main effects appeared to be non-existent (Figure 3.3g).

The dominating style was used more frequently either by high achievement oriented managers when the targets' connection power was low or by those low on achievement orientation when the connection power was high. The converse was also true--thereby indicating a little impact of main effects.

Similarly when the targets' connection power was low, those high on power orientation used the dominating style more often and less often when they were low on this need. However, high

connection power did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of this style between those low and high on power orientation (Figure 3.3h).

Superior. Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior appear in Table 2.14 and significant interactions are shown in Figure 3.4.

The obliging style was used more often by those executives high on need for achievement when the target's connection power was high, and less often by those low on this need when the superior's connection power was perceived to be low (Figure 3.4a).

When the target's information power was high, respondents high on need for achievement used the dominating style more frequently, and less frequently by respondents low on this need when the information power was perceived to be low (Figure 3.4b).

Similarly when the target's connection power was high, respondents high on independence orientation used the dominating style more frequently, whereas those low on this need used this style less frequently (Figure 3.4c).

## Personal Attributes by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The personal characteristics of the individuals and the degree of conflict between the parties involved may also determine the respondents' style of handling conflict. The following paragraphs contain the contribution of the personality-degree of conflict interactions in determining the use of

Tabel 3.14

Significant Interactions between Personal Attributes and Bases of Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Bases of Power | Personal Attributes | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Information | * | DOM (.14; .02) | * |
| Connection | * | OBL (.13; .02) | DOM (.11; .01) |
| Organizational | * | * | * |
| Personal | * | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

conflict handling styles. Of a total of thirty interactions, two were statistically significant for subordinates and three for the superior. The personal attributes entered on the first step in the regression equation, followed by the degree of conflict on the second step, and finally the interaction terms entered.

**Subordinates**. The regression results of the effects of personality by degree of conflict interactions on the use of

**(a)** **(b)** **(c)**
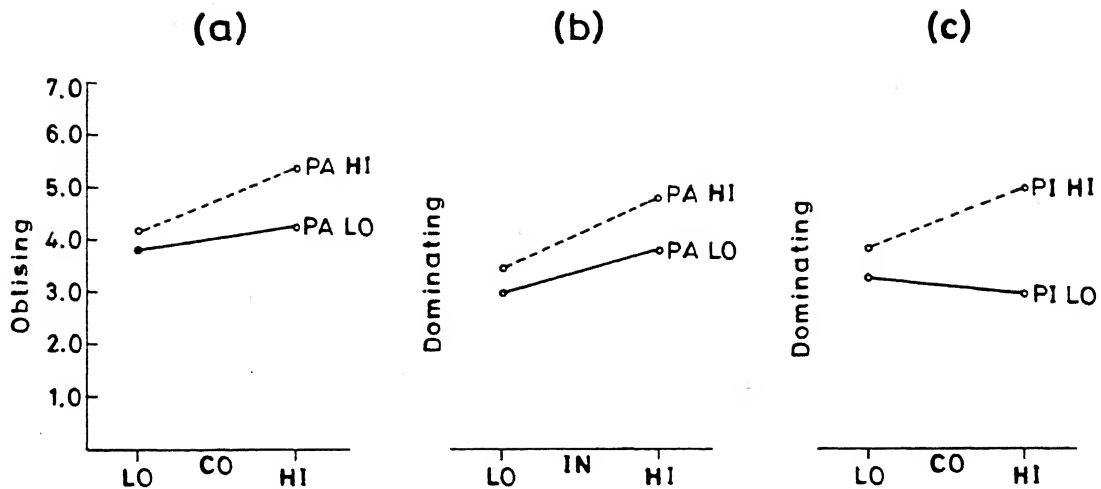
Figure 3.4.   Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate
superior as a function of personal attributes   and
bases of power.   For abbreviations, see Figure 3.
and Figure 3.3.

conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table 3.15. Significant interactions are depicted in Figure 3.5.

Table 3.15

Significant Interactions Between Degree of Conflict and Personal Attributes on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Personal Attributes | Degree of Conflict | |
|---|---|---|
| Power | * | |
| Achievement | * | |
| Independence | INT (-.18; .03) | AVO (-.15; .02) |

Note.   Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

When the degree of conflict with subordinates was perceived to be low, respondents high on independence orientation used the integrating and avoiding styles more frequently, whereas those low on this need used these styles less frequently. Additionally, high degree of conflict did not make any significant difference in the use of these styles between those low and high on independence orientations (Figure 3.15a and Figure 3.15b).

**Superior**.   Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior appear in Table 3.16. Significant interactions are displayed in Figure 3.5.

Table 3.16

Significant Interactions Between Degree of Conflict and  Personal Attributes  on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Personal Attributes | Degree of Conflict | |
|---|---|---|
| Power | INT (-.13; .02) | AVO (.14; .02) |
| Achievement | COM (.18; .03) | * |
| Independence | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and  $R^2$ change,  respectively; * No significant  interactions  on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see  Table 3.11.

As  is evident from figure  3.5c,  respondents high on power orientation  used the integrating style less frequently when  the degree of conflict with superior was low.  On the other hand, the integrating  style  was used more frequently when the  degree  of conflict  was high and power orientation of the  respondents  was low.

Respondents  high  on  power orientation used  the  avoiding style  more often when the degree of conflict with  superior  was high  and less often when the degree of conflict was low  (Figure 3.5d).

When  the degree of conflict was high,  respondents high  on achievement  orientation  used  the  compromising  style  more frequently as compared to those low on this need.  No difference between the low and the high achievement oriented respondents was observed in the low conflict situation (Figure 3.5e).
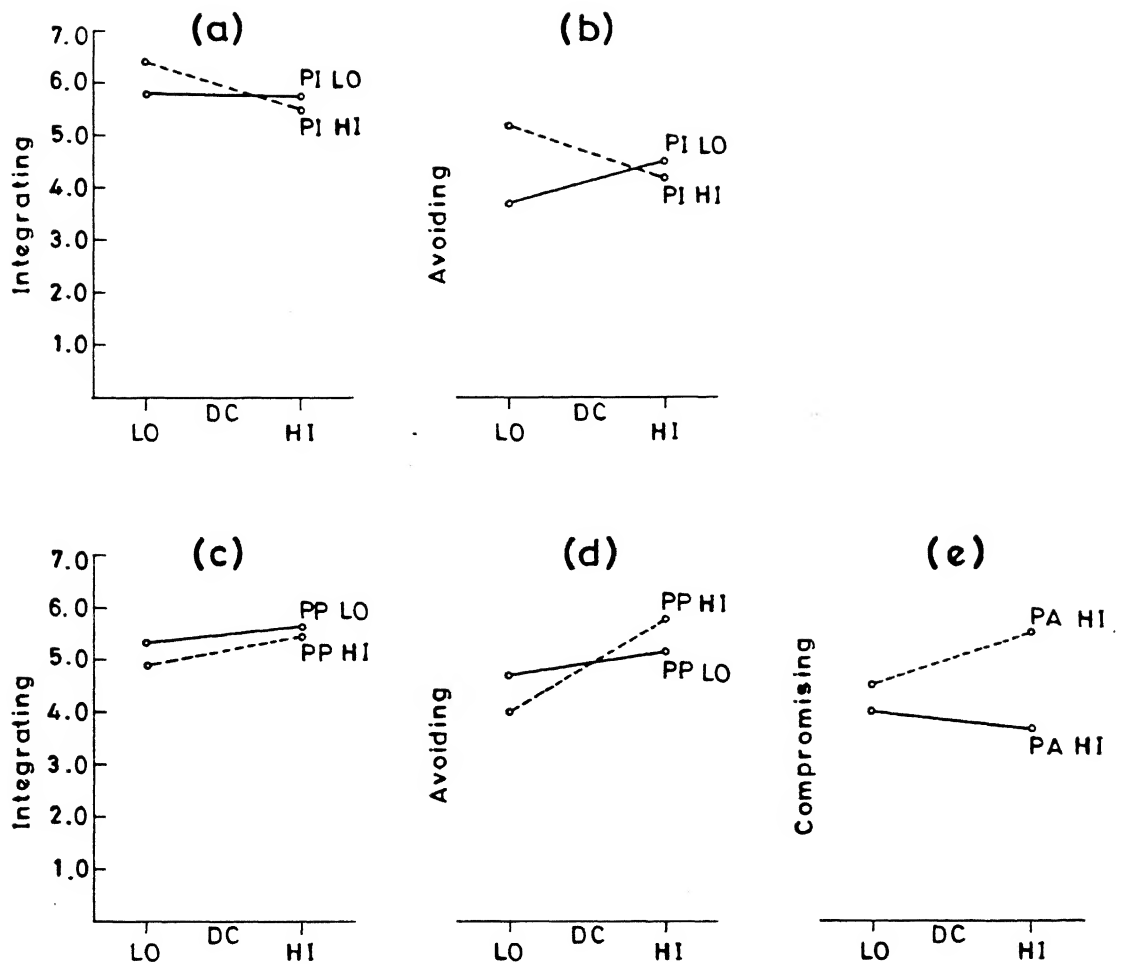
Figure 3.5. Mean conflict handling styles scores immediate subordinate (Figures a and b) immediate superior (Figures c, d, and e) function of personal attributes and degre conflict. Abbreviation: DC = Degree of Conf For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.1.

## Personal Attributes by Extent of Influence Interactions

The personal attributes of the respondents and the extent to which they influence others (target person/persons) may determine the use of conflict handling styles. The following paragraphs examine the contribution of the interaction between personal attributes and the extent of influence to the use of conflict handling styles. Of the thirty interactions, one was statistically significant for subordinates and one for superior. The order of predictors that entered in the regression equation was determined in such a way that personal attributes entered on the first step, followed by the extent of influence on the second step, and their crossproducts on the third step.

**Subordinates**. Regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates appear in Table 3.17 and the significant interaction is presented in Figure 3.6.

The avoiding style was used more frequently when respondents were high on power orientation and their extent of influence on the subordinates was also high, and less frequently when the extent of influence was low. Additionally, the low extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented respondents (Figure 3.6a).

**Superior**. Table 3.18 shows the regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with superior. The significant interaction is portrayed on Figure 3.6.

Table 3.17

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Personal

Attributes  on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate

Subordinates

| Personal Attributes | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Power | AVO (.15; .02) |
| Independence | * |
| Achievement | * |

Note.  Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$
change,  respectively;  * No  significant  interactions
on  any  conflict  handling  style; For abbreviation  see
Table 3.11.

Table 3.18

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Personal

Attributes  on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate

Superior

| Personal Attributes | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Power | * |
| Independence | OBL (.13; .02) |
| Achievement | * |

Note.  Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$
change,  respectively;  * No  significant  interactions
on any conflict  handling  style;  For  abbreviation  see
Table 3.11.

Respondents high on independence orientation used the obliging style more frequently when their extent of influence on superior was high, and less frequently when the influence was low. The two groups did not differ significantly in the use of this conflict handling style when the extent of influence was low (Figure 3.6b).

## Personal Attributes by Causes of Conflict Interactions

The basic cause(s) underlying conflict and the personal characteristics of the respondents may complement each other in determining the manner in which conflict may be resolved. Of a total of one hundred fifty interaction pairs, two were statistically significant for subordinates and thirteen for superior.

The personal attributes entered on the first step in the regression equation, followed by the causes of conflict on the second step. The interaction terms were allowed to enter on the last step.

**Subordinates**. Table 3.19 shows the regression results of conflict handling styles with subordinates. Significant interactions are shown on Figure 3.7.

When clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict with subordinates was more frequent, respondents low on independence orientation used the integrating style more frequently as compared to those high on this orientation. However, less frequent clashes of values, beliefs, and interests did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of
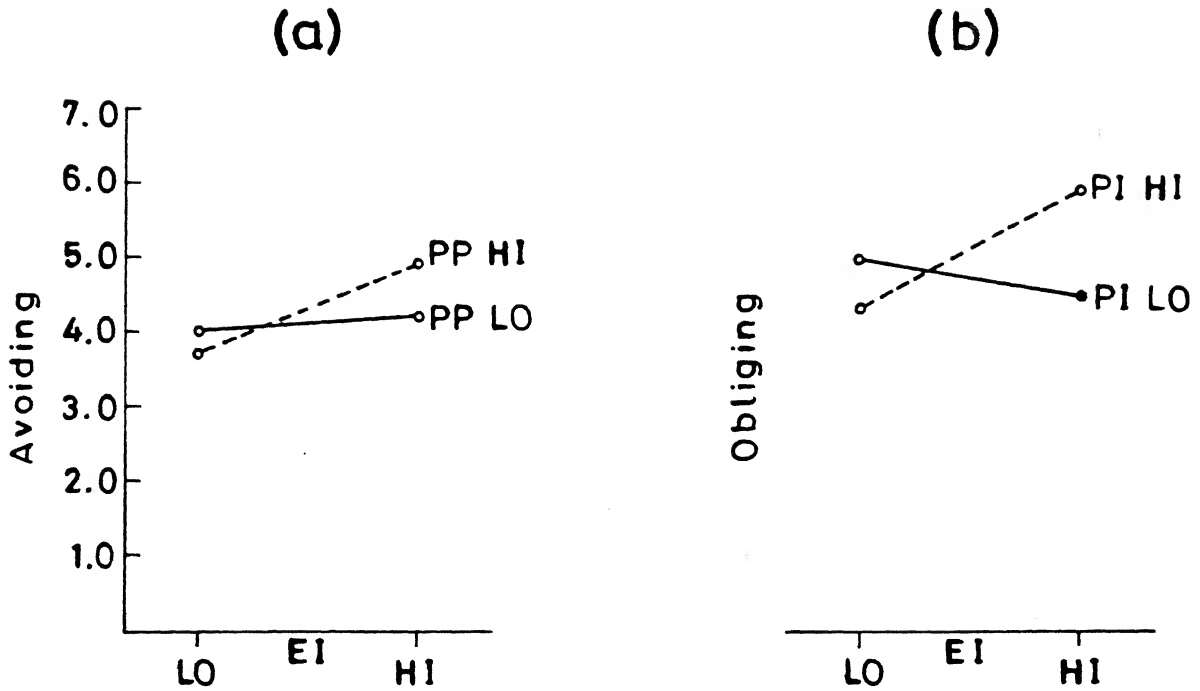
Figure 3.6.    Mean conflict handling styles scores wi
immediate subordinates (Figure a) and immedi
superior (Figure b) as a function of perso
attributes and extent of influen
(Abbreviation: EI = Extent of Influence).
other abbreviations, see Figure 3.1).

this  style between high and low independence oriented executives (Figure 3.7a).

Similarly, the integrating style was used more frequently when respondents were high on power orientation and scarcity of resources as a cause was perceived to be a more frequent cause of

Table 3.19

Significant Interactions Between Personal Attributes and Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Causes | Personal Attributes | | |
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * | * | INT (-.24; .05) |
| Scarcity of Resources | INT (.13; .02) | * | * |
| Power Incongruence | * | * | * |
| Role Expectations | * | * | * |
| Role Ambiguity | * | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

**(a)**  **(b)**
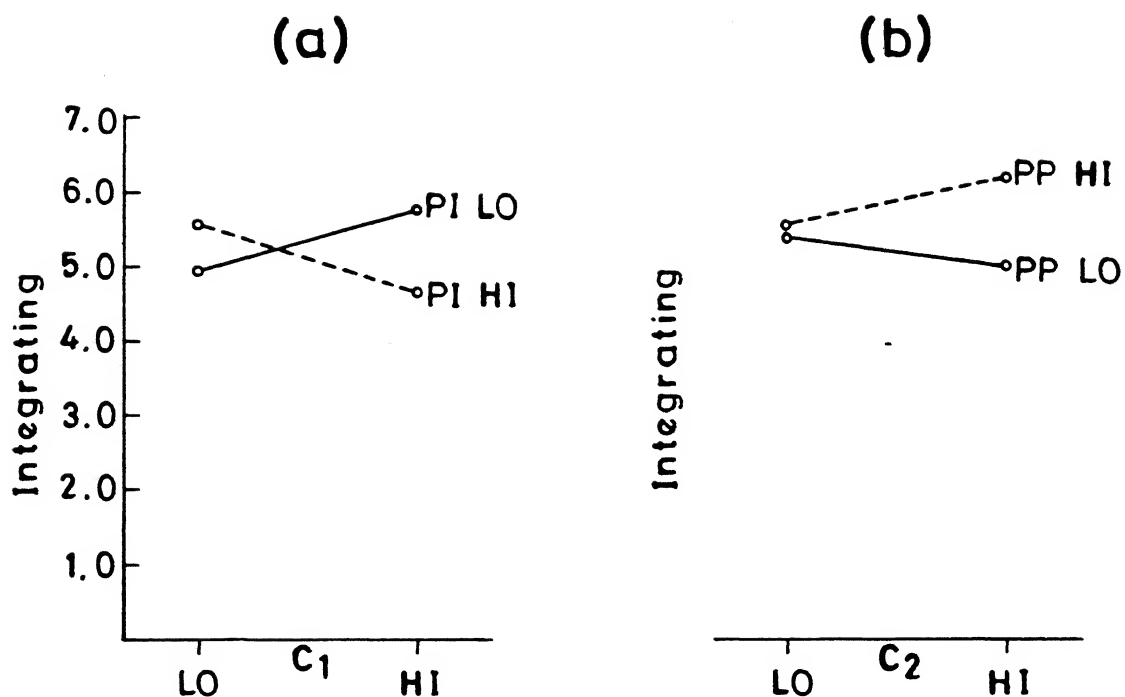
Figure 3.7.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immedia
subordinates as a function of personal attribut
and causes of conflict. (Abbreviations: C1
Clashes of values, beliefs, and interest; C2
Scarcity of resources; For other abbreviation
see Figure 3.1.

conflict with subordinates, and less frequently when this cause was perceived less frequently. However, less frequent scarcity of resources did not make a difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented respondents (Figure 3.7b).

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior appear in Table 3.20 and eight significant interactions for illustrative purposes are diagrammed in Figure 3.8.

When role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was perceived to be less frequent, respondents high on achievement orientation used the integrating style more frequently than those low on this orientation. Additionally, when role ambiguity was perceived to be more frequent, the difference in the use of this style between low and high achievement oriented executives was not significant (Figure 3.8a).

When executives were high on independence orientation, they used the integrating style more frequently when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict with the superior was less frequent than when it was more frequent. However, more frequent clashes of values, beliefs, and interests did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high independence oriented respondents (Figure 3.8b).

When clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents high on power orientation used the integrating style more frequently as compared to those

low on this orientation.  More frequent perception of this  cause

Table 3.20

Significant  Interactions Between Personal Attributes and  Causes

of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate

Superior

| Causes | Personal Attributes | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | INT (-.15; .02) | * | INT (-.13; .02) COM (-.12; .01) |
| Scarcity of Resources | COM (.14; .02) | DOM (.12; .01) | * |
| Power Incongruence | INT (-.17; .03) | OBL (.12; .01) | * |
| Role Expectations | INT (-.13; .02) | OBL (.14; .02) | * |
| Role Ambiguity | AVO (-.12; .14) DOM (.16; .02) INT (-.13; .01) | INT (-.13; .01) | * |

2

Note.  Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R$ change,  respectively;  * No  significant  interactions on any conflict handling  style;  For  abbreviations  see Table 3.11.

did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of integrating style between low and high power oriented respondents (Figure 3.8c).

When power incongruence as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the integrating style more often when they were high on power orientation, and less often when they were low on this orientation. When power incongruence was more frequent, the integrating style was used in about the same frequency by low and high power oriented respondents (Figure 3.8d).

High on power orientation, respondents used the integrating style more often when role expectations and role ambiguity were less frequent causes of conflict. Respondents low on power orientation used this style less often when these causes were perceived more frequently (Figure 3.8e and Figure 3.8f).

Respondents low on power orientation used the avoiding style more often when role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was more frequent and less often when role this cause was perceived less frequently. Additionally, more frequent role ambiguity did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented respondents.

The compromising style was used more frequently when respondents were high on independence orientation and clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was less frequent, and less often when respondents were low on this orientation. When this cause was perveived more frequently,

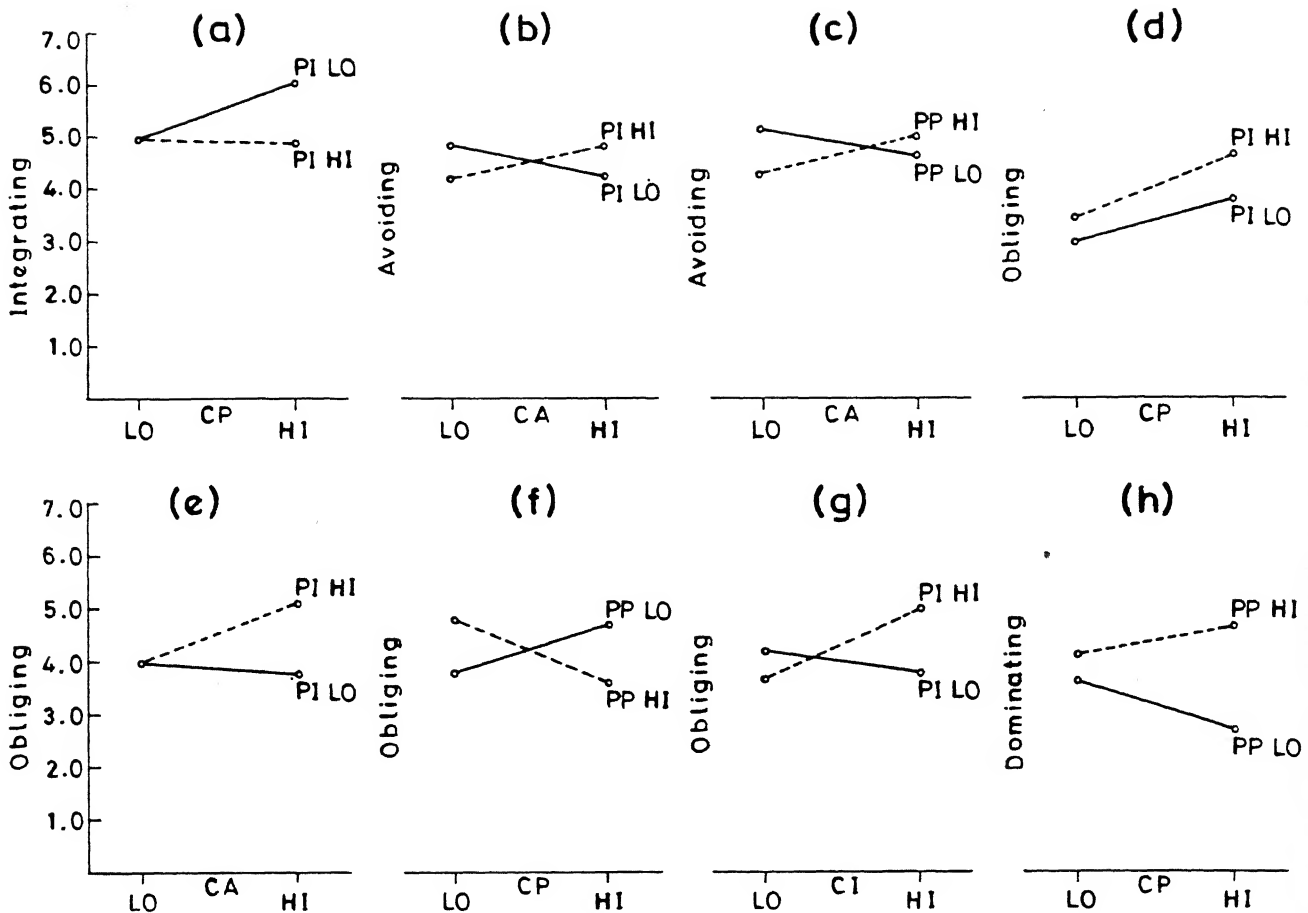Figure 3.8.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediat
superior as a function of personal attributes  an
causes  of  conflict.  (Abbreviation: C3  =  Pow
Incongruence;  C4 = Role Expectations; C5  =  Rol
Ambiguity; For other abbreviations, see Figure 3
and Figure 3.7.

respondents used the compromising style in about the same frequency irrespective of their power orientations.

The compromising style was used more often when respondents were high on power orientation and scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when respondents were low on power orientation and scarcity of resources was a less frequent cause of conflict. However, less frequently perceived scarcity of resources did not make a significant difference in the use of this style (Figure 3.8g).

Respondents high on achievement orientation used the obliging style more frequently as compared to those low on this orientation. In both cases, power incongruence as a cause of conflict was perceived more frequently. Less frequent power incongruence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high achievement oriented respondents (Figure 3.8h).

When role expectations as a cause of conflict was more frequent, respondents high on achievement orientation used the obliging style more often as compared to those low on this orientation. Respondents high on achievement orientation used the dominating style more frequently when scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when scarcity of resources was less frequent. When scarcity of resources was perceived less frequently, respondents used the dominating style in about the same frequency irrespective of their achievement orientations. Finally, the dominating style

was used more often when respondents were high on power orientation and role ambiguity was more frequent, and less often when respondents were low on power orientation and role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was less frequent.

## Climate by Bases of Power Interactions

The perceived bases of power of the target person and the climate of the organization may interact significantly in determining the use of conflict handling styles. Of the one hundred twenty interactions, two were statistically significant for subordinates and eight were significant for superior.

The results regarding the contribution of these interactions are presented below. Climate, bases of power, and their interactions were forced to enter on the first, second, and third steps, respectively, in the regression equation.

**Subordinates.** The regression results of conflict handling styles with subordinates are summarized in Table 3.21. Figure 3.9 depicts the significant interactions.

When the climate was high achievement oriented, respondents used the dominating style more often when the targets' organizational power was high and less often when it was low (Figure 3.9a).

Similarly, the dominating style was used more frequently when the targets' organizational power was high and climate was high independence oriented, and less frequently when both the targets' organizational power and climate were low (Figure 3.9b).

Table 3.21

Significant Interactions Between Climate and Bases of power on
the Use of Clonflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Bases of Power | Climate | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Information | * | * | * |
| Connection | * | * | * |
| Organizational | * | DOM (.15; .02) | DOM (.15; .02) |
| Personal | * | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior are summarized in Table 3.22 and significant interactions are portrayed on Figure 3.10.

The avoiding style was used more often when the target's connection power was high and climate was low on independence orientation, and less often when the connection power was low but climate was high on independence orientation. However, when the
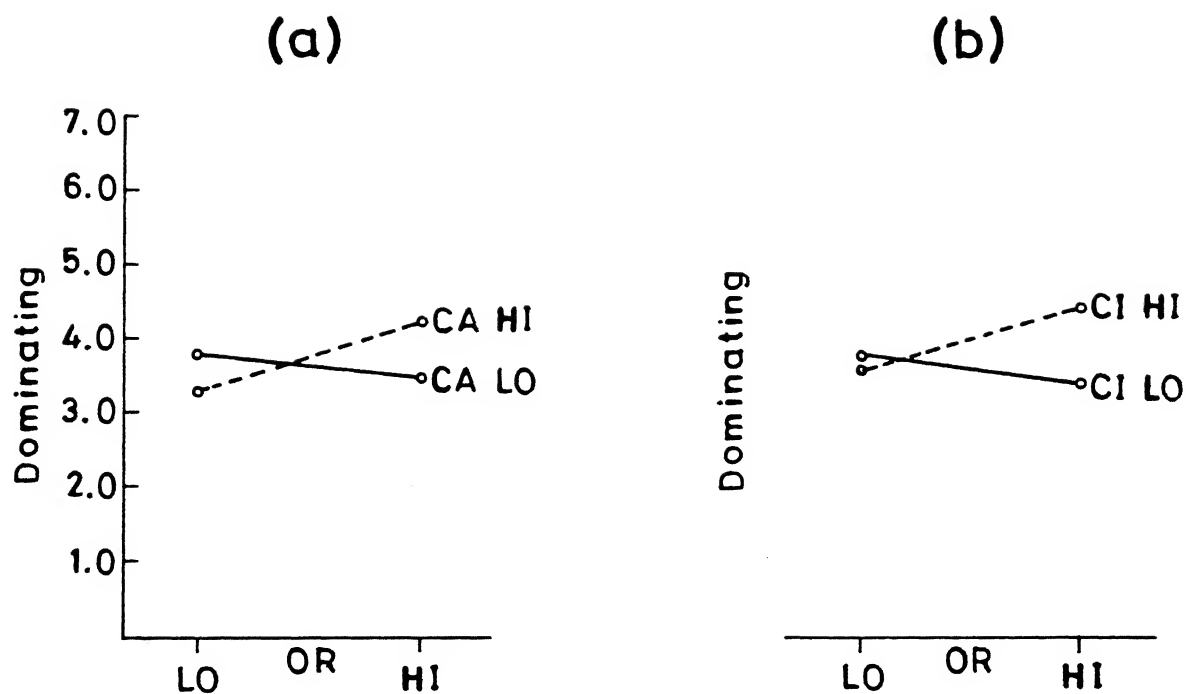
Figure 3.9.   Mean conflict handling style scores with immedia&shy;
subordinates as a function of climate and bases
power.   For   abbreviations,   see   Figure   3.1   a
Figure 3.3.

Table 3.22

Significant Interactions Between Climate and Bases of Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Bases of Power | Climate | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Information | * | OBL (.16; .03) | * |
| Connection | DOM (-.15; .02) | DOM (.13; .02) | AVO (-.14; .02) |
| Organizational | DOM (-.14; .02) | * | OBL (.20; .04) |
| Personal | * | * | COM (.22; .05) |
| | | | OBL (.16; .02) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

connection power was high, respondents used the avoiding style in about the same frequency irrespective of the climate (Figure 3.10a).

When the target's personal power was high, respondents used the compromising style more frequently in a high independence oriented climate, and less frequently in a climate low on this orientation. Additionally, low personal power did not make a

significant difference in the use of this style in low and high independence oriented climates (Figure 3.10b).

The obliging style was used more frequently either in a low achievement oriented climate when the target's information power was low or in a high achievement oriented climate when information power was high. The converse was also true-- indicating a non- existence of main effects (Figure 3.10c).

Similarly when personal power was high, respondents used the obliging style more frequently in a high independence oriented climate, and less frequently in a low independence oriented climate. Low personal power did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between low and high independence oriented climates (Figure 3.10d).

In a high independence oriented climate, respondents used the obliging style more frequently when the target's organizational power was high and less frequently when this was low. However, high organizational power did not make a significant difference in the use of this style (Figure 3.10e).

When the superior's connection power was perceived to be low, respondents used the dominating style more often in a high power oriented climate than in a low power oriented climate. High connection power did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented climates (Figure 3.10f).

Respondents used the dominating style more often when the superior's organizational power was low and climate was high
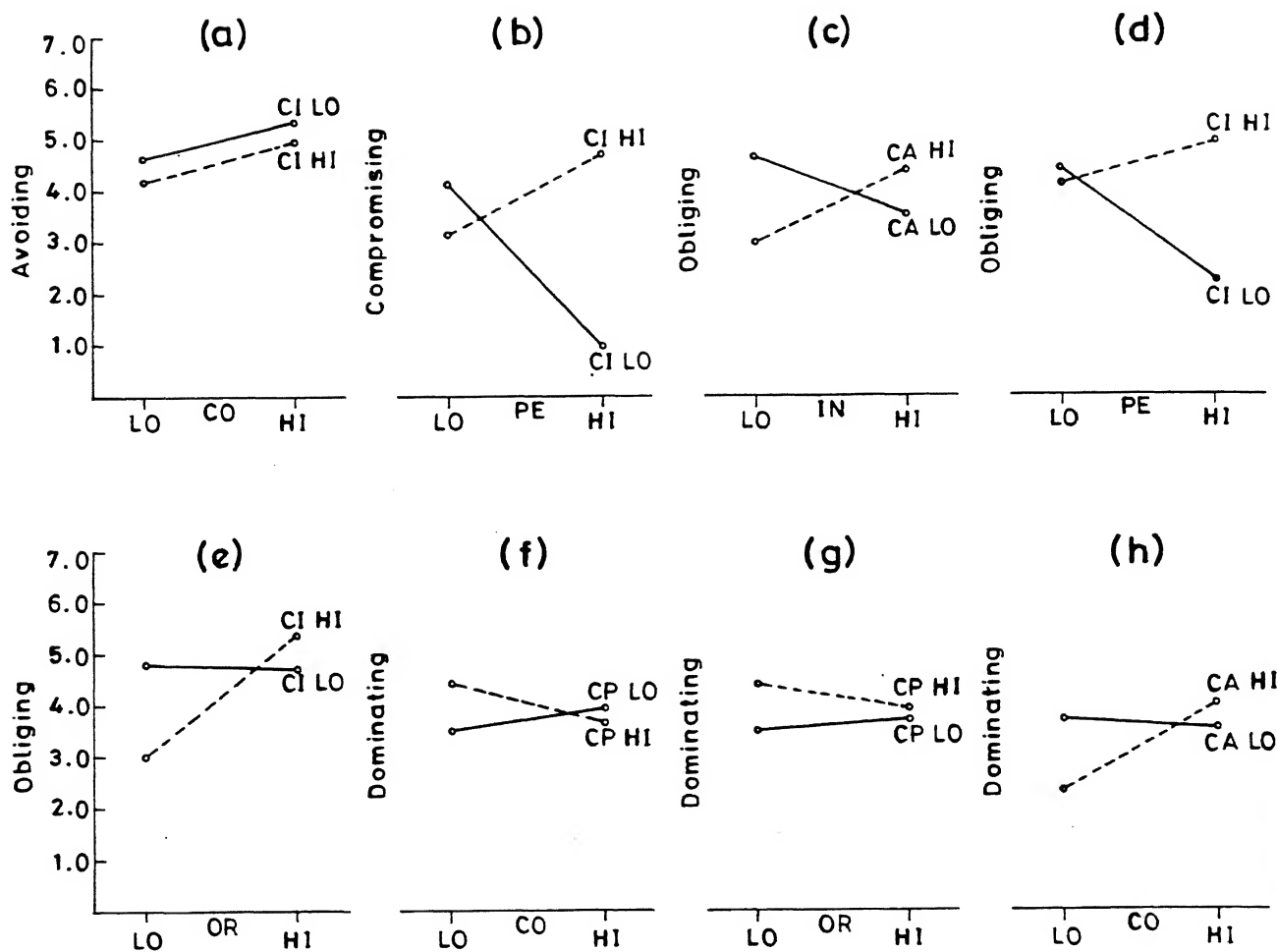
Figure 3.10. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediat superior as a function of climate and bases o power. For abbreviations, see Figure 3.1 an Figure 3.3.

power oriented, whereas it was used less often in a low power oriented climate. High organizational power did not make a significant difference in the use of this style in low and high power oriented climates (Figure 3.10g).

Finally, in a high achievement oriented climate, respondents used the dominating style more frequently when the connection power was perceived to be high and less frequently when it was low. The main effects of climate and power base appeared to be nonsignificant (Figure 3.10h).

## Climate by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The climate of the organization was composed of three factors, that is, achievement, power, and independence. These factors interacted with the degree of conflict in predicting the respondents' use of conflict handling styles. Out of thirty interactions, two were significant for subordinates and two were significant for superior, resulting in four significant interactions. The order of inclusion of each predictor was such that the degree of conflict entered on the first step in the regression equation, followed by climate on the second step, and lastly the interaction terms entered.

**Subordinates**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table 3.23. Figure 3.11 shows the significant interactions.

The avoiding and compromising styles were used more frequently either in a high power oriented climate when the degree of conflict with subordinates was low or in a low power

Table 3.23

Significant Interactions Between Degree of Conflict and Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Climate | Degree of Conflict | |
|---|---|---|
| Power | AVO (-.23; .05) | COM (-.15; .02) |
| Achievement | * | * |
| Independence | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

oriented climate when the degree of conflict was high. The converse was also true, thereby indicating no significant impact of main effects (Figure 3.11a and Figure 3.11b).

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles appear in Table 3.24. Significant interactions are portrayed on Figure 3.11.

When the climate was perceived to be high power oriented, respondents used the avoiding style more frequently when the degree of conflict with superior was high, and less frequently when the degree of conflict was low. Additionally, the high degree of conflict did not make a significant difference in the

use of this style between the low and the high power oriented

Table 3.24

Significant Interactions Between Degree of Conflict and Climate
on the Use of Conflict handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Climate | Degree of Conflict |
|---|---|
| Power | AVO (.15; .02) |
| Achievement | * |
| Independence | COM (-.22; .04) |

Note.   Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$
change, respectively; * No significant interactions on
any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table
3.11.

climates (Figure 3.11c).

Respondents used the compromising style more frequently when
the climate was high independence oriented and less frequently
when the climate was low on this orientation.   In both cases the
degree of conflict was low.   High degree of conflict with
superior made no difference in the use of this style between the
low and the high independence oriented climates (Figure 3.11d).

**Climate by Extent of Influence Interactions**

Under this head is examined the contribution of the
interactions between the respondents' extent of influence over
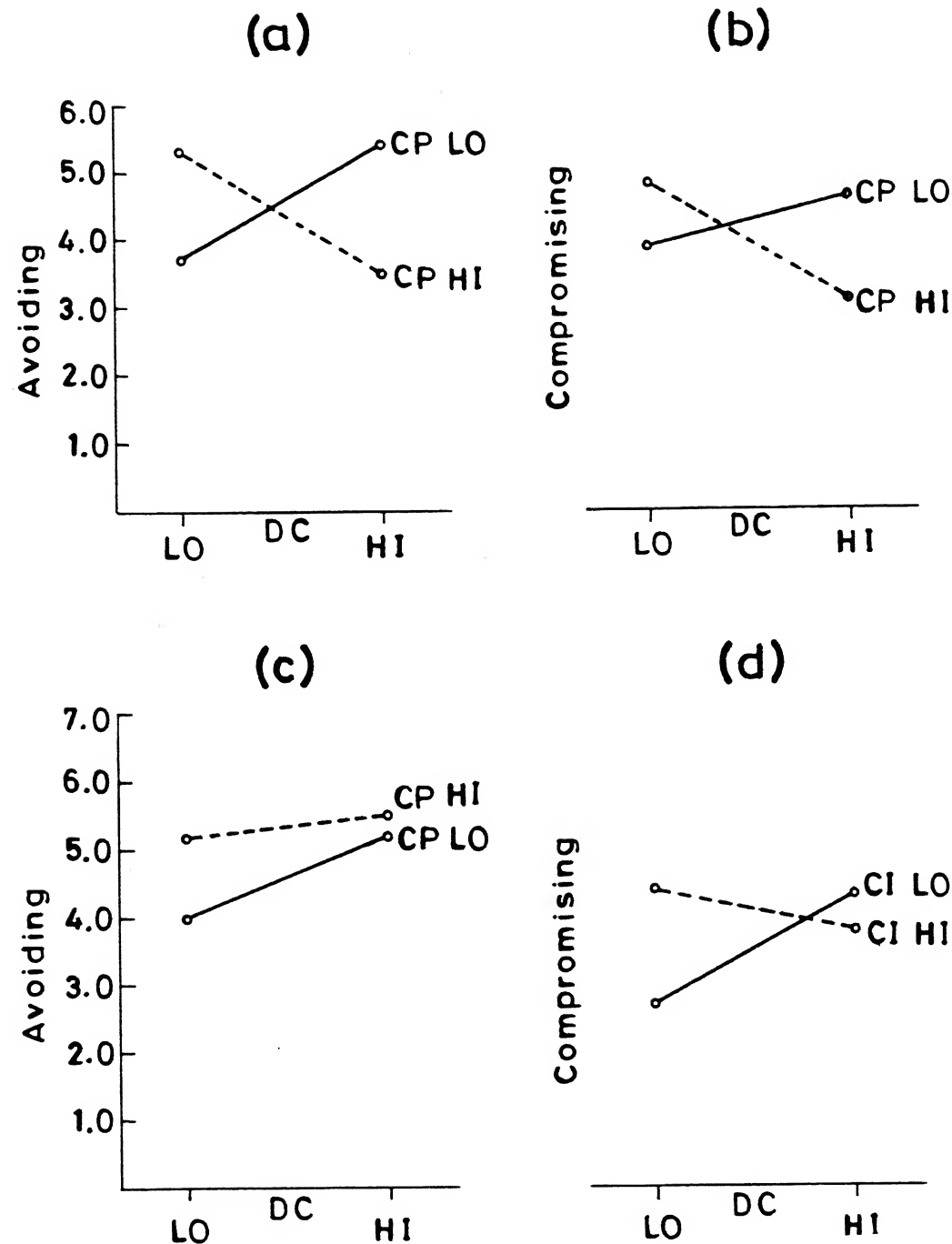
Figure 3.11. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate subordinates (Figure a and b) and Immediate superior (Figure c and d) as a function of climate and degree of conflict. For abbreviations, see Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.5.

the target person(s) and the perceived climate of the organization in determining the use of various conflict handling styles. Of the thirty interactions, three were statistically significant for subordinates and five for superior. The order of inclusion of each predictor entering the regression equation was determined in such a way that the extent of influence entered on the first step, followed by climate on the second step, and the interaction terms entered last.

**Subordinates**. Table 3.25 shows the regression results of conflict handling styles with subordinates. Significant interactions are displayed in Figure 3.12.

As is evident from Figure 3.12a, the integrating style was used more frequently when the climate was perceived to be high power oriented and the respondents' extent of influence over the subordinates was low, and less often when the climate was low power oriented and the respondents' extent of influence was high. The main effects of power climate and respondents' extent of influence were not apparent.

The compromising style was used more frequently when the respondents' extent of influence over subordinates was low and the climate was low independence oriented, and less frequently when the climate was high on this orientation. Respondents with high extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between the low and the high independence oriented climates (Figure 3.12b).

Table 3.25

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

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| Climate | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Power | INT (-.13; .02) |
| Independence | COM (.26; .06) |
| Achievement | COM (.16; .02) |

---

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

The compromising style was used more often when the climate was low achievement oriented and the extent of influence was low, and less often when the extent of influence was high. However, low extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between the low and the high achievement oriented climates (Figure 3.12c).

**Superior**. Table 3.26 shows the regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with superior and significant interactions are presented in Figure 3.12.

Table 3.26

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Climate on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Climate | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Power | INT (-.16; .02) |
| Independence | OBL (.18; .03) |
| | COM (.25; .06) |
| | DOM (.18; .03) |
| Achievement | AVO (.17; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

When the extent of influence over the superior was low, respondents used the integrating style more often when the climate was perceived to be high power oriented, and less often when the climate was low power oriented. High extent of influence did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of this style between low and high power oriented climates (Figure 3.12d).

When the respondents' extent of influence over the superior was high, they used the avoiding style more frequently in a high achievement oriented climate. However, this style was used in
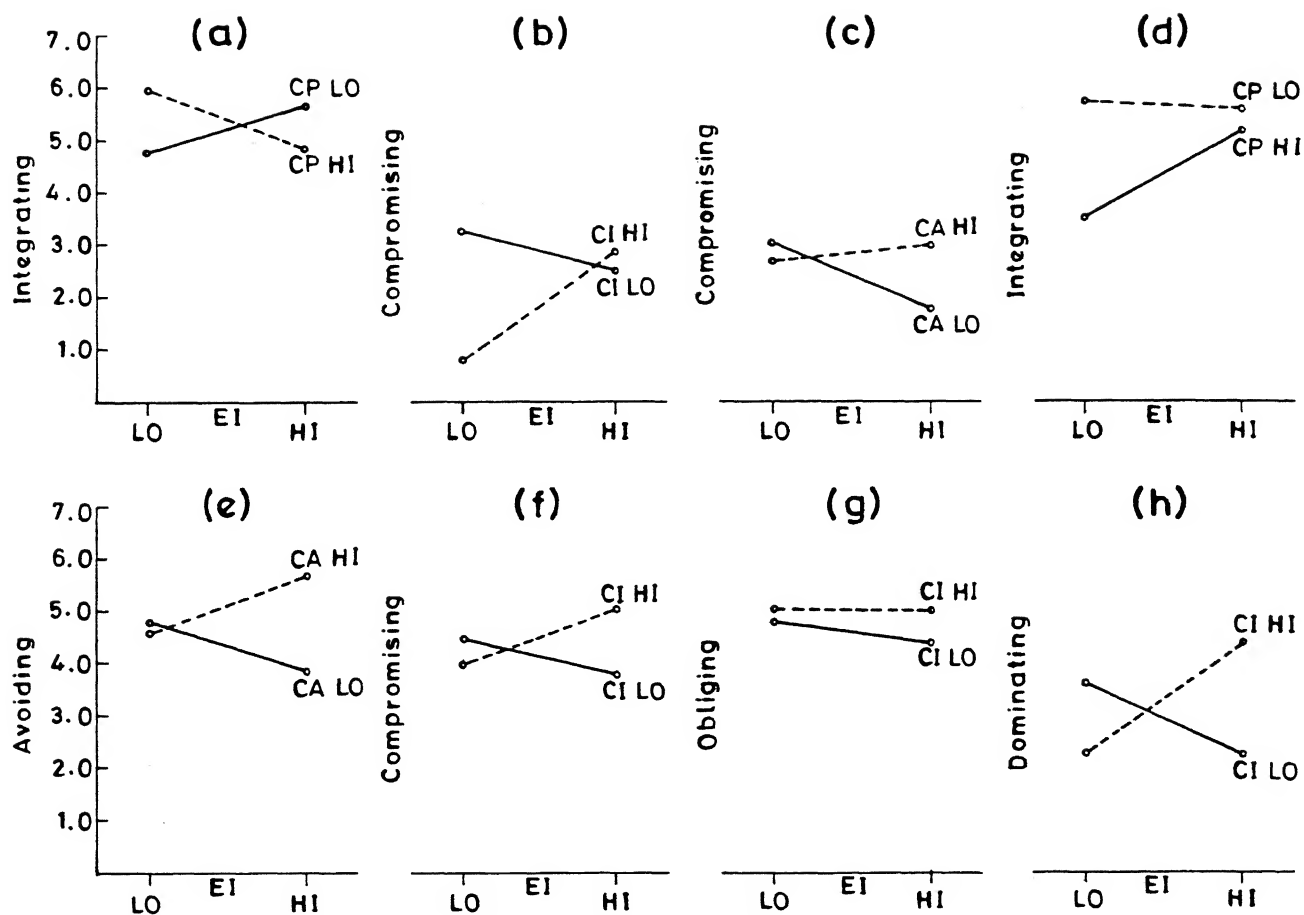
Figure 3.12.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate
subordinates  (Figure  a, b, and  c)  and  immediate
superior (Figures d, e, f, g, h) as a function  of
climate    and    extent    of    influence.    For
abbreviations, see Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.6.

about the same frequency by the respondents in low and high achievement oriented climates when the extent of influence was low (Figure 3.12e).

Respondents used the compromising style more often when their extent of influence over their superior was high and climate was perceived to be high independence oriented, and less frequently when the climate was low independence oriented (Figure 3.12f).

In a high independence oriented climate, respondents used the obliging style more often when their extent of influence was high, and less often in a low independence oriented climate. Low extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of obliging style between climates (Figure 3.12g).

The dominating style was used more frequently in a high independence oriented climate and less frequently in a low independence oriented climate. In both cases, the respondents' extent of influence was high. Additionally, low extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between climates (Figure 3.12h).

## Climate by Causes of Conflict Interactions

The basic causes of conflict and the climate of the organization taken togehter may have a significant impact upon the respondents' behavioral manifestations of conflict resolution. Out of one hundred fifty interactions, seven were statistically significant for subordinates and six for superior. Climate, causes of conflict, and their interactions entered on

the first, second, and third steps, respectively, in the regression equation.

**Subordinates**. Regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table 3.27 and significant interactions appear in Figure 3.13.

When role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was perceived to be less frequent, respondents used the integrating style more frequently in a high independence oriented climate, and less frequently when the climate was perceived to be low independence oriented. More frequent role ambiguity did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high independence oriented climates (Figure 3.13a).

When climate was perceived to be high power oriented, respondents used the avoiding style more often when role ambiguity was a more frequent cause of conflict, and less often when role ambiguity was less frequent (Figure 3.13b).

Similarly, respondents used the avoiding style more frequently when role expectations as a cause of conflict was perceived to be more frequent and climate was low independence oriented, and less frequently when climate was high independence oriented.

When power incongruence was perceived to be a less frequent cause of conflict, respondents used the compromising style more often when climate was perceived to be low achievement oriented, and less often when the climate was high achievement oriented. The main effects of climate and power incongruence appeared to be

Tabel 3.27

Significant Interactions Between Climate and Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Causes | Climate | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * | * | COM (.14; .02) |
| Scarcity of Resources | OBL (-.11; .01) | * | * |
| Power Incongruence | * | COM (.12; .01) <br> OBL (.19; .03) | * |
| Role Expectations | * | * | AVO (-.13; .02) |
| Role Ambiguity | AVO (.16; .01) | * | INT (-.16; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

nil (Figure 3.13d).

When clashes of values, beliefs, and interests was a less frequently perceived cause of conflict, respondents used the compromising style more often when climate was perceived to be low independence oriented, and less often when climate was high independence oriented. When this cause was observed more frequently, the difference in the use of compromising between the two climates was not significant (Figure 3.13e).

Similarly, when the climate was low power oriented, respondents used the obliging style more frequently when power incongruence as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less frequently when power incongruence was less frequent. Additionally, more frequent power incongruence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented climates (Figure 3.13f).

When power incongruence as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the obliging style more often in a low achievement oriented climate, and less often in a high achievement oriented climate (Figure 3.13g).

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with immediate superior appear in Table 3.28 and significant interactions are depicted in Figure 3.14.

In a low power oriented climate, respondents used the integrating style more often when scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was perceived to be less frequent, and less often when scarcity of resources was high. However, the main effects of climate and resource scarcity on the use of this style

Figure 3.13.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate subordinates as a function of climate and causes of conflict. For abbreviations, see Figure 3.1, Figure 3.7, and Figure 3.8.

were not apparent (Figure 3.14a).

Table 3.28

Significant Interactions Between Climate and Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict handling styles with Immediate Superior

| Causes | Climate | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Power | Achievement | Independence |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * | INT (-.14; .02) | * |
| Scarcity of Resources | INT (.12; .02) COM (.12; .01) | * | * |
| Power Incongruence | COM (.12; .01) | OBL (.12; .01) | * |
| Role Expectations | * | * | * |
| Role Ambiguity | * | INT (-.14; .02) | |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

Respondents used the integrating style more often when clashes of values, beliefs, and interest was a less frequently

perceived cause of conflict and climate was high achievement oriented, and less often in a low achievement oriented climate (Figure 3.14b).

Similarly, the integrating style was used more often in a high achievement oriented climate than in a low achievement oriented climate when role ambiguity was perceived to be a less frequent cause of conflict. However, when role ambiguity was perceived more frequently, the difference in the use of this style between the two climates was not significant (Figure 3.14c).

In a low power oriented climate, respondents used the compromising style more often when scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was perceived less frequently, and less often when scarcity of resources was perceived more frequently. But the main effects of climate and resource scarcity were not apparent (Figure 3.14d).

When power incongruence as a cause of conflict was perceived more frequently with the superior, respondents used the compromising style more frequently in a high power oriented climate, and less frequently in a low power oriented climate. Less frequent power incongruence did not make any difference in the use of this style between low and high power oriented climates (Figure 3.14e).

Respondents used the obliging style more frequently when the climate was perceived to be high achievement oriented and power incongruence as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less
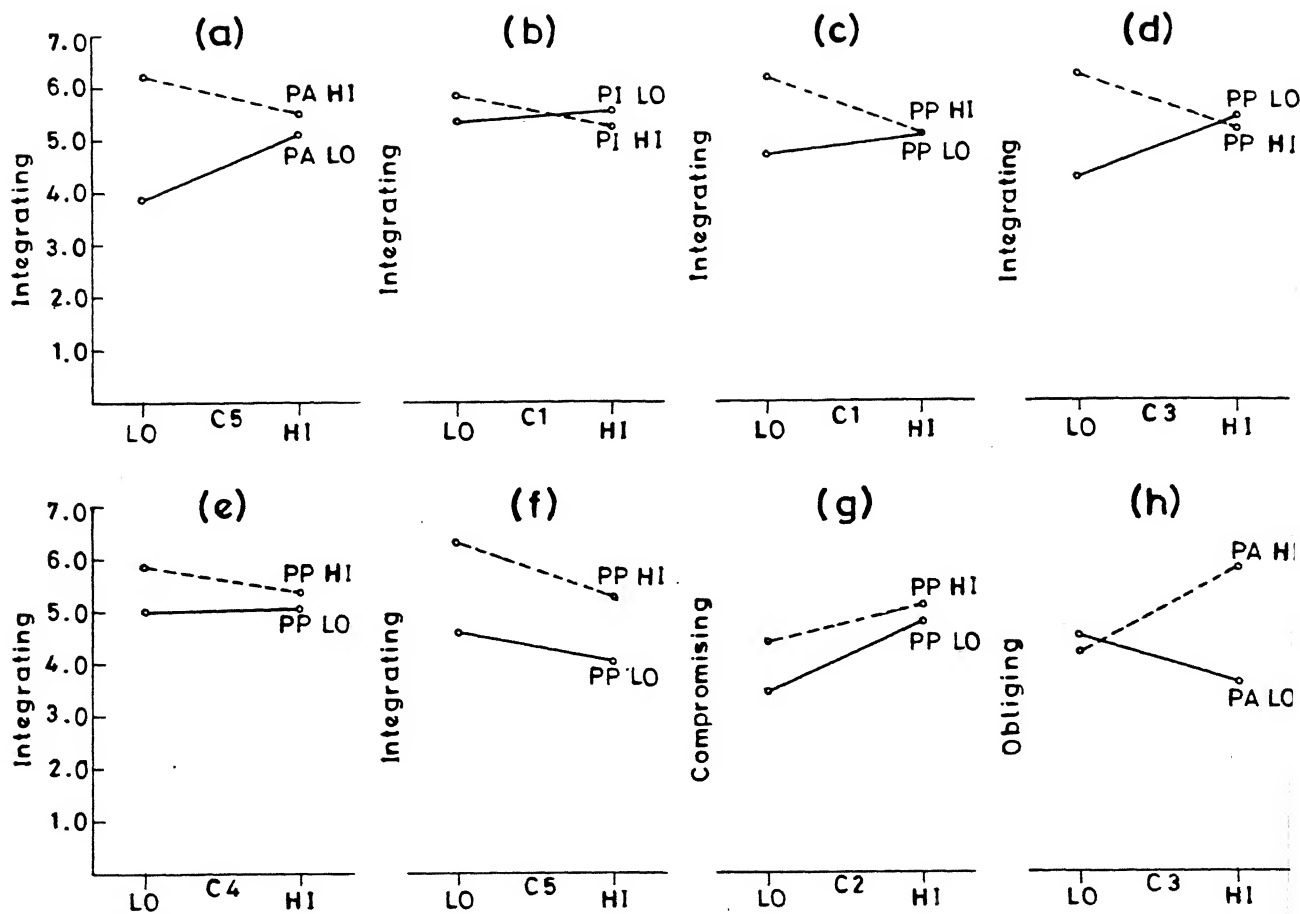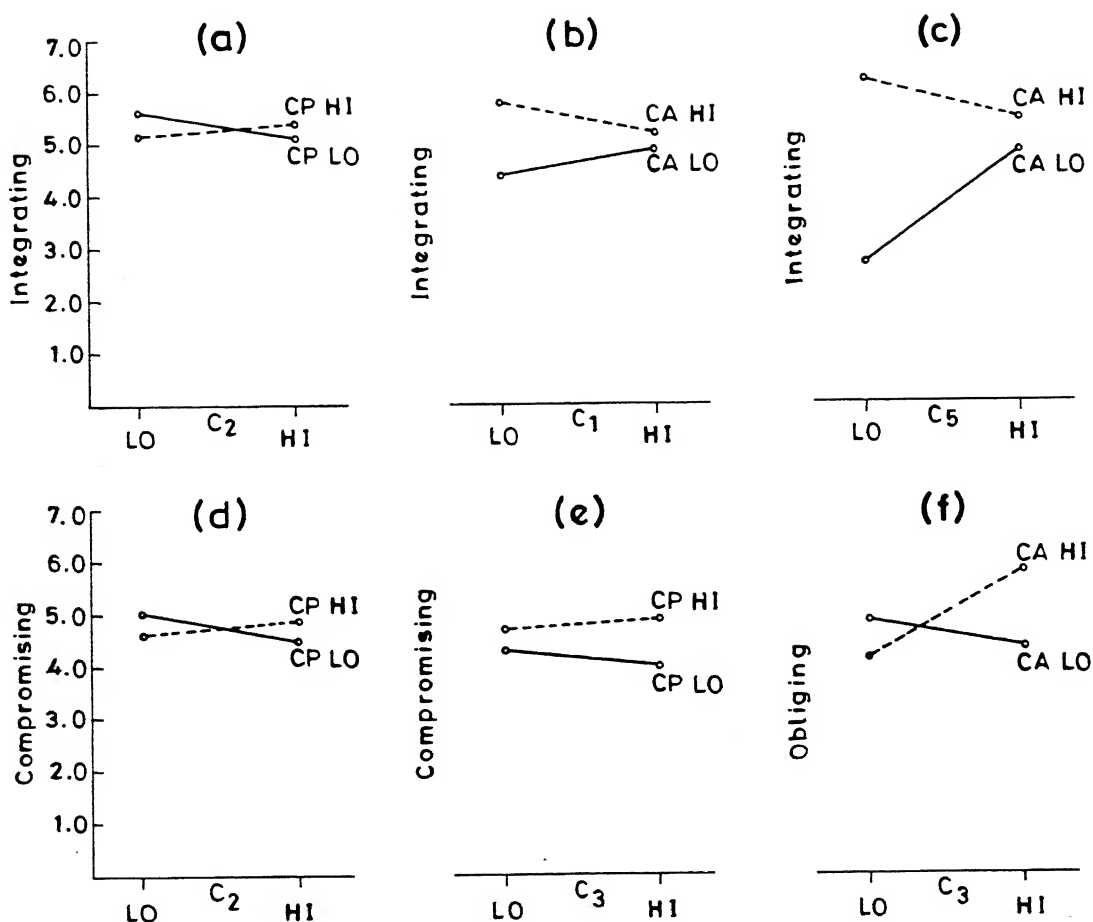
Figure 3.14. Mean conflict handling scores with immediate superior as a function of climate and causes of conflict. For abbreviations, see Figure 3.1, Figure 3.7, and Figure 3.8.

frequently when climate was low achievement oriented and power incongruence was perceived to be less frequent (Figure 3.14f).

## Bases of Power by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The degree of conflict and the perceived bases of power of the target person(s) may interact significantly in determining the course of action to be taken by the respondents. Out of forty interaction pairs, three were statistically significant for subordinates and three for superior. The order of inclusion of the predictors was such that degree of conflict entered on the first step, followed by bases of power on the second step, and interaction terms on the third step.

**Subordinates**. Regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table 3.29. Significant interactions are portrayed on Figure 3.15.

When the targets' organizational power was perceived to be low, respondents used the compromising style more frequently when the degree of conflict was high, and less frequently when the degree of conflict was low (Figure 3.15a). Similarly, when the targets' personal power was low, respondents used the obliging style more often when the degree of conflict was high, and less often when it was low. However, this style was used in about the same frequency when the degree of conflict was high, irrespective of the targets having low or high personal power (Figure 3.15b).

Respondents used the obliging style more often when the degree of conflict was high, and less often when the degree of conflict was low. In both cases the targets' organizational

power was low (Figure 3.15c).

Table 3.29

Significant Interactions Between Bases of Power and Degree of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Bases of Power | Degree of Conflict |
|---|---|
| Information | * |
| Connection | * |
| Organizational | COM (-.15; .02) |
| | OBL (-.12; .01) |
| Personal | OBL (-.17; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

**Superior**. Table 3.30 shows the regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with superior. Figure 3.15 depicts the significant interactions.

When the target's information power was high, respondents used the integrating style more frequently when the degree of conflict was high, and less frequently when the degree of

Table 3.30

Significant Interactions Between Bases of Power and Degree of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior

| Bases of Power | Degree of Conflict |
|---|---|
| Information | AVO (-.19; .02) |
| | DOM (.17; .02) |
| | INT (.21; .03) |
| Connection | * |
| Organizational | * |
| Personal | * |

Note.    Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

conflict was low.    High degree of conflict did not contribute significantly to the variance in the use of this style between those with high and low information power (Figure 3.15d).

The avoiding style was used more frequently when the target's information power was low and the degree of conflict was high, and less frequently when the degree of conflict was

low. The main effects of information power and the degree of conflict on the use of this style were not apparent (Figure 3.15e).

When the degree of conflict was perceived to be high, respondents used the dominating style more often when the superior's information power was high, and less often when this power was low. Additionally, low degree of conflict did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between low and high information power base (Figure 3.15f).

## Bases of Power by Extent of Influence Interactions

Under this head is examined the contribution of the interaction between targets' perceived bases of power and the respondents' extent of influence. Out of forty interactions, pairs, none was significant for subordinates but four for superior. Extent of influence entered on the first step in the regression equation, followed by bases of power on the second step, and finally the interaction terms entered.

**Subordinates**. No significant interaction emerged between the targets' bases of power and the extent of influence on the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates.

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with superior appear in Table 3.31 and significant interactions are portrayed on Figure 3.16.

When the respondents' extent of influence over the superior was low, they used the integrating style more frequently when the superior's information power was high, and less frequently when
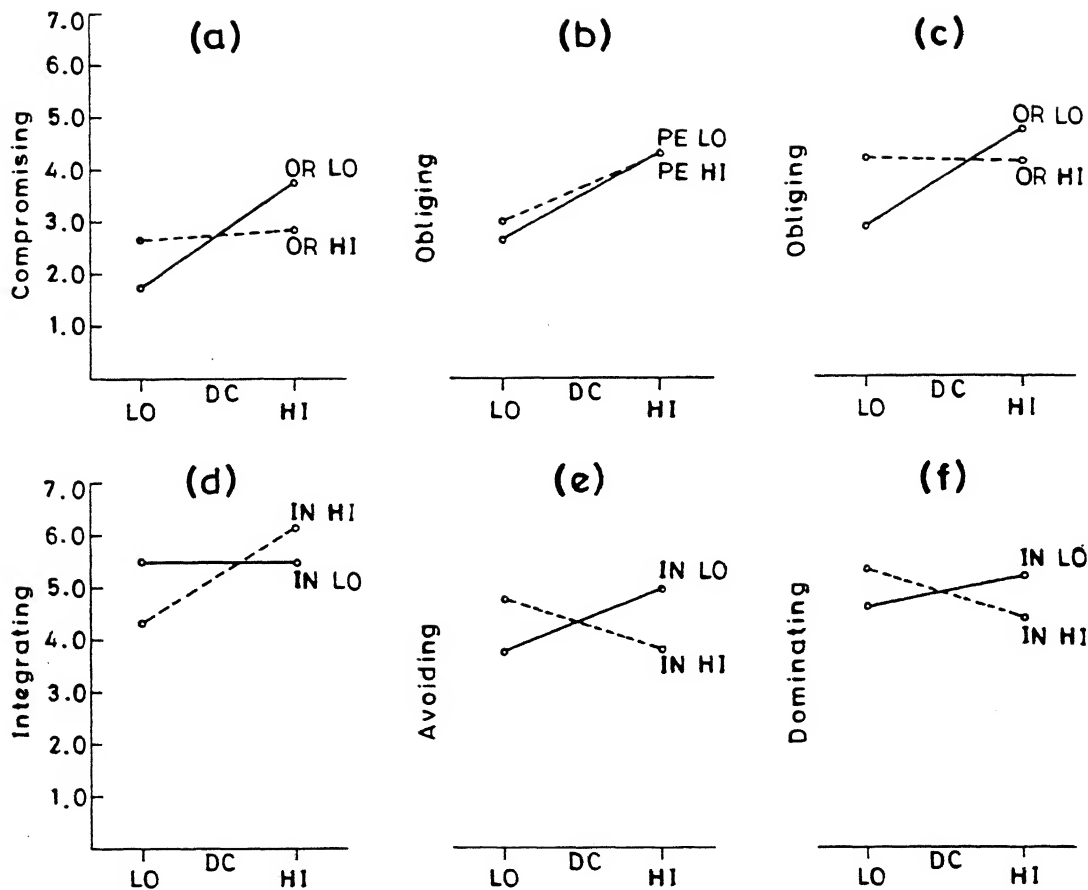
<u>Figure 3.15.</u>   Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate
subordinates (Figures a, b, c) and immediate
**superior**    (Figures d, e, f) as a function of
bases of power and causes of conflict.
Abbreviations:   LO = Low, HI = High).    For
abbreviations, see Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.5.

information power was low.  High extent of influence over

Table 3.31

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Bases of
Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate
Superior

---

| Bases of Power | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Information | INT (-.16; .02) |
| Connection | DOM (.21;  .04) |
| Organizational | COM (-.16; .03) |
| Personal | INT (.14;  .02) |

---

Note.   Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$
change,  respectively; * No significant interactions  on
any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see  Table
3.11.

the  superior  did  not make a  significant  difference  in  this
connection (Figure 3.16a).

When the target's personal power was high,  respondents used
the  integrating  style  more frequently  when  their  extent  of
influence  was  high,  and less frequently when their  extent  of
influence  was  low and the superior's personal  power  was  low.

High extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style (Figure 3.16b).

When the target's organizational power was low, respondents used the compromising style more often when their extent of influence over the superior was high, and less often when their extent of influence was low. High extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high organizational power bases (Figure 3.16c).

Finally, respondents used the dominating style more often when the target's connection power was high and their extent of influence was high, and less often when their extent of influence was low. However, low extent of influence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between those having high and low connection power (Figure 3.16d).

## Bases of Power by Causes of Conflict Interactions

Under this head are examined the interactions between the targets' perceived bases of power and causes of conflict in determining the use of conflict handling styles. Of the two hundred interaction pairs, three were statistically significant for subordinates and twelve for superior. The order of inclusion of each predictor entering the regression equation was determined in such a way that bases of power entered on the first step, followed by causes of conflict, and their interaction on the third step.

**Subordinates**. Regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table 3.32.
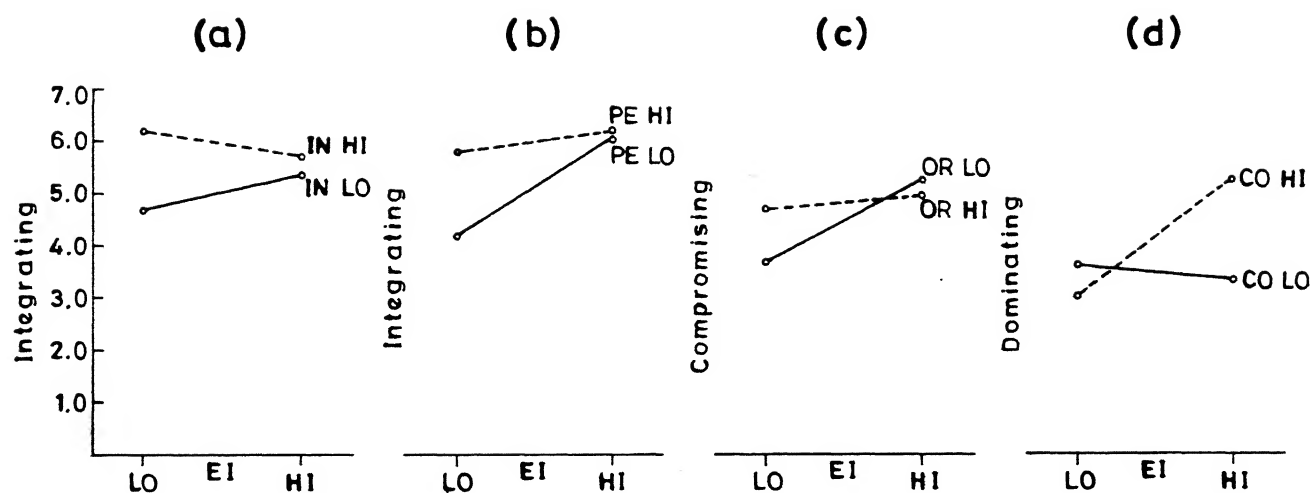
Figure 3.16. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate superior as a function of bases of power and extent of influence. Abbreviations: LO = Low; HI = High. For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.6.

Significant interactions are presented in Figure 3.17.

Table 3.32

Significant Interactions Between Causes of Conflict and Bases of Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Causes of Conflict | Bases of Power | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Information | Connection | Organizational | Personal |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * | * | DOM (-.14; .02) | * |
| Scarcity of Resources | INT (-.12; .01) | * | * | * |
| Power Incongruence | AVO (-.14; .02) | * | * | * |
| Role Expectations | * | * | * | * |
| Role Ambiguity | * | * | * | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

When the targets' information power was high, respondents

used the integrating style more often when scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was less frequent, and less often when scarcity of resources was more frequent. However, more frequent scarcity of resources did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between high and low information power (Figure 3.17a).

The avoiding style was used more often either when power incongruence as a cause of conflict was more frequent and the targets had low information power or when power incongruence was less frequent and the targets had high information power. The converse was also true—indicating a non-existence of main effects (Figure 3.17b).

The dominating style was used more frequently when organizational power was perceived to be high and clashes of values, beliefs, and interests between the parties were less frequent, and less often when organizational power was low and clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was more frequent. More frequent clashes of values, beliefs, and interests did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high organizational power (Figure 3.17c).

**Superior**. Regression results of conflict handling styles with supeior appear in Table 3.33. Only eight significant interactions for illustrative purposes are diagrammed in Figure 3.18.
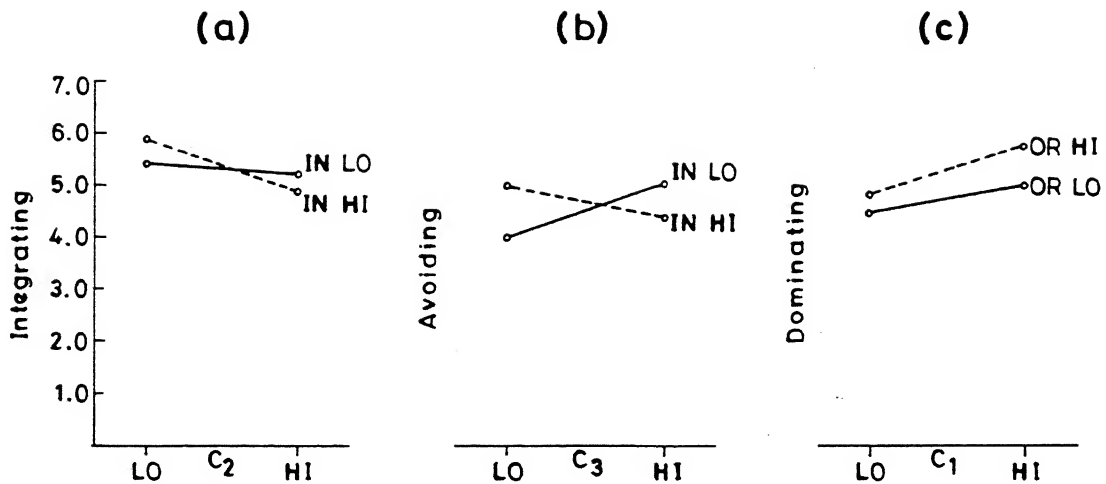
**Figure 3.17.** Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate subordinates as a function of bases of power and causes of conflict. Abbreviations: LO = Low; HI = High. For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.7.

Table 3.33

Significant Interactions Between Causes of Conflict and Bases of
Power on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate
Superior

| Causes of Conflict | Bases of Power | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Information | Connection | Organizational | Personal |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * | * | INT (-.17; .03) | OBL (-.14; .02) |
| Scarcity of Resources | OBL (-.15; .02) | AVO (.11; .01) | * | * |
| Power Incongruence | | * | INT (.12; .01) | * |
| Role Expectations | INT (.13; .02) AVO (-.15; .02) OBL (-.12; .01) | * | * | AVO (-.12; .01) |
| Role Ambiguity | * | * | INT (-.16; .03) | AVO (-.14; .02) OBL (-.17; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$
change, respectively; * No significant interactions on
any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table
3.11.

When the target's organizational power was perceived to be high, respondents used the integrating style more frequently when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict were less frequent than when they were more frequent. However, more frequent clashes did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high organizational power bases (Figure 3.18a).

Respondents used the integrating style more often when organizational power was high and power incongruence as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when it was less frequent. More frequent power incongruence did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high organizational power (Figure 3.18b).

Similarly, respondents used the integrating style more often when role ambiguity was less frequent, and less often when role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was more frequent. In both cases, organizational power was high. More frequent role ambiguity did not affect significantly the use of this style between low and high organizational power.

When role expectations as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the integrating style more often when the target's information power was low and less often when information power was high. More frequent role expectations as a cause did not make any significant difference in this regard.

Respondents used the avoiding style more often when the target's personal power was perceived to be low and role

expectations as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when role expectations was less frequent. The main effects of personal power and role expectations were not apparent (Figure 3.18c).

Similarly, the avoiding style was used more often when role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was more frequent and less often when role ambiguity was less frequent. In both cases, the target's personal power was low. However, more frequent role ambiguity did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high personal power.

When the target's connection power was high, respondents used the avoiding style more often when scarcity of resources was more frequently perceived, whereas this style was used less often when the superior's connection power was low and scarcity of resources was a less frequent cause of conflict (Figure 3.18d).

When the target's information power was low, respondents used the avoiding style more frequently when role expectations were more frequent, and less frequently when role expectations were less frequent. When role expectations were more frequent, the avoiding style was used in about the same frequency, regardless of the superior's information power being high or low.

When clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the obliging style more often when the target's personal power was high than when it was low. More frequent clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause did not make a significant difference in the use of

this style (Figure 3.18e).

The obliging style was used more frequently either when role ambiguity was more frequent and the targets' personal power was low or when role ambiguity was less frequent and personal power was high. The converse was also true--thereby indicating a non-existence of main effects (Figure 3.18f).

When the scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the obliging style more often when information power was high, and less often when information power was low. Additionally, more frequent scarcity of resources as a cause did not make any significant difference in the use of this style between low and high information power (Figure 3.18g).

Respondents used the obliging style more often when the superior's information power was low and role expectations as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when this cause was perceived less frequently. However, less frequent role expectations did not make a significant difference in the use of this style between low and high information power bases (Fgure 3.18h).

## Degree of Conflict by Causes of Conflict Interactions

In the following paragraphs are presented the results regarding the contribution of the interactions between causes of conflict and the degree of conflict in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. Out of fifty interaction pairs, only two were significant for the subordinates.
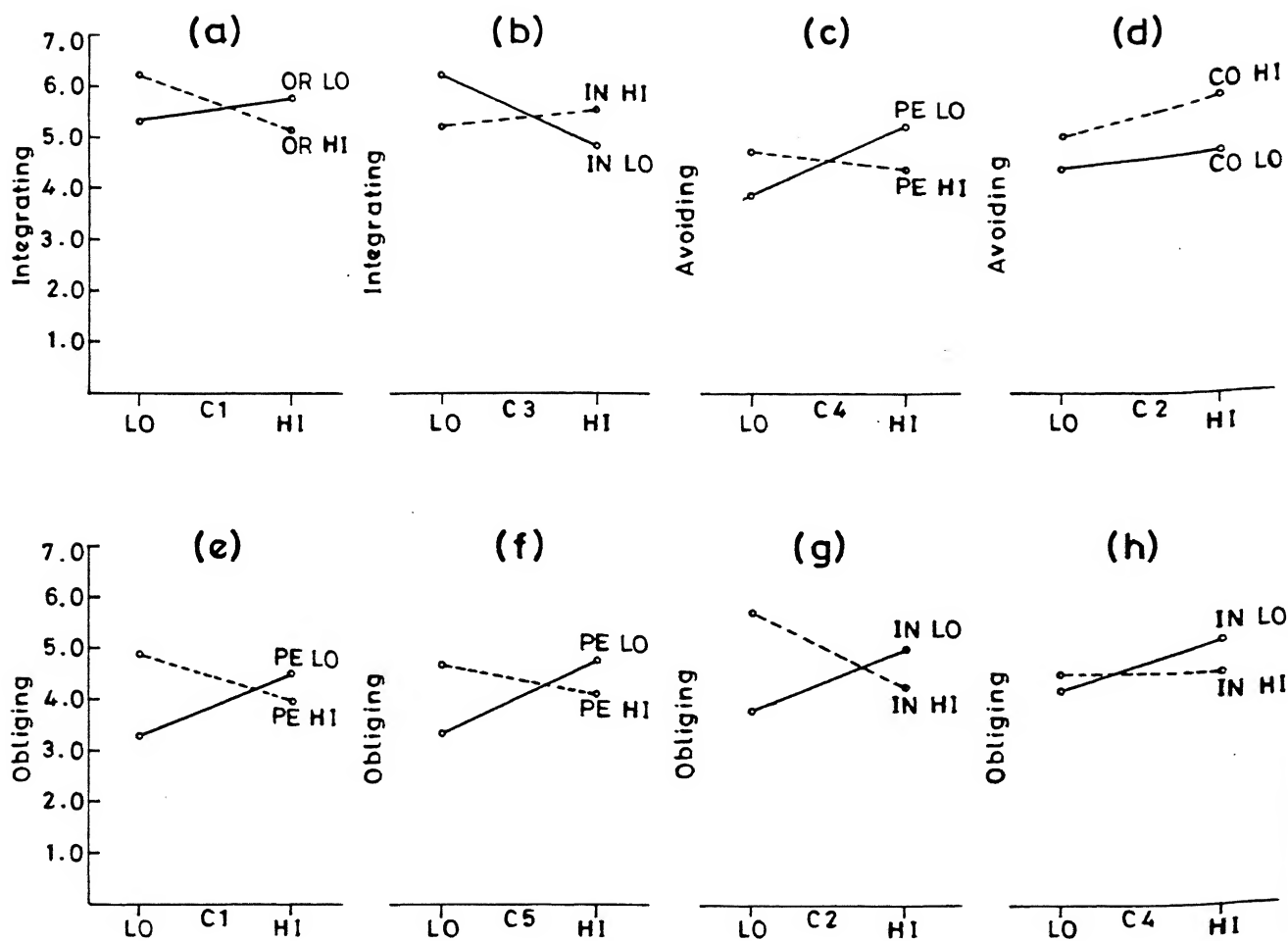
Figure 3.18. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate superior as a function of bases of power and causes of conflict. Abbreviations: LO = Low; HI = High. For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.3, Figure 3.7, and Figure 3.8.

The degree of conflict, causes of conflict, and their interactions entered on the first, second, and third steps, respectively, in the regression equation.

**Subordinates**. Regression results of conflict handling styles appear in Table 3.34 and significant interactions are depicted in Figure 3.19.

Table 3.34

Significant Interactions Between Degree of Conflict and Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates

| Causes of Conflict | Degree of Conflict |
|---|---|
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * |
| Scarcity of Resources | COM (.13; .02)  DOM (.14; .02) |
| Power Incongruence | * |
| Role Expectations | * |
| Role Ambiguity | * |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; *No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

**(a)**     **(b)**
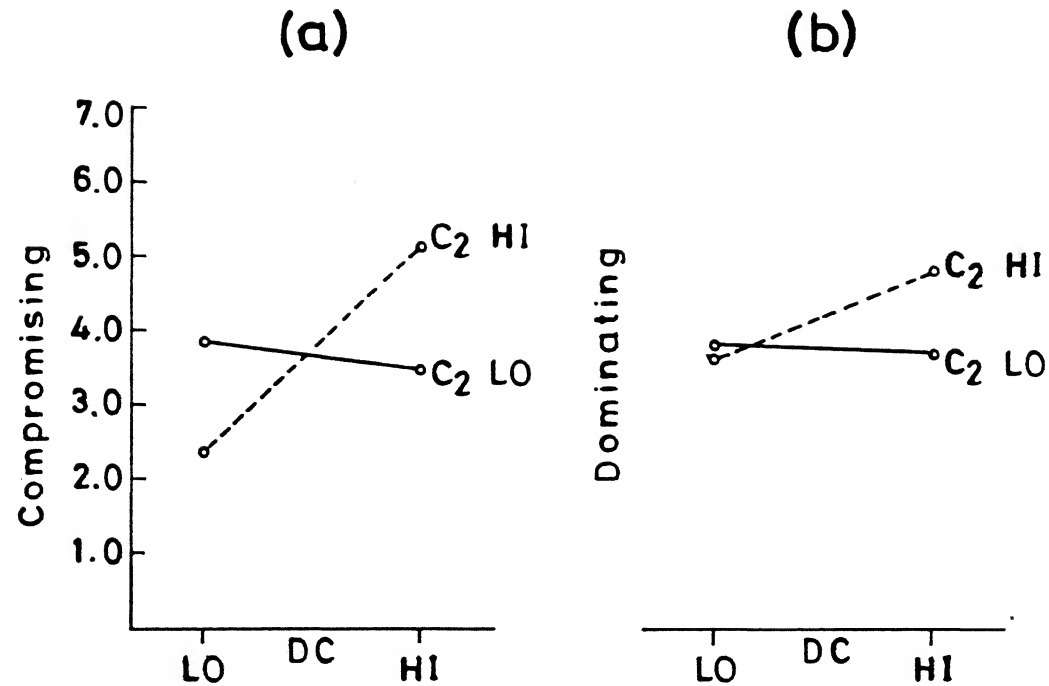
Figure 3.19.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate
                subordinates  as a function of degree of  conflict
                and causes of conflict.  Abbreviations: LO =  Low;
                HI  = High.  For other  abbreviations, see  Figure
                3.5, Figure 3.7, and Figure 3.8.

When the scarcity of resources as a cause of conflict was more frequent, respondents used the compromising style more often when the degree of conflict with subordinates was high, and less often when the degree of conflict was low. The main effects of scarcity of resources and degree of conflict on the use of this style were not apparent (Figure 3.19a).

Similarly, when scarcity of resources as a cause was more frequent, respondents used the dominating style more often when the degree of conflict with subordinates was high, and less often when conflict was low. Additionally, when the degree of conflict was low, respondents used the dominating style in about the same frequency regardless of the scarcity of resources being more or less (Figure 3.19b).

**Superior**. No significant interactions emerged between the causes of conflict and the degree of conflict on the use of conflict handling styles with superior.

## Extent of Influence by Causes of Conflict Interactions

Examined under this head is the contribution of the interactions between the respondents' extent of influence over the target person and the causes of conflict to the use of conflict handling styles. Of the fifty interaction pairs, five were statistically significant for subordinates and two for superior.

Extent of influence entered on the first step in the regression equation, followed by causes of conflict on the second step, and finally their crossproducts entered.

**Subordinates**.     Regression   analysis   results   of   conflict handling styles with subordinates appear in Table  3.35.    Figure 3.20 shows the significant interactions.

Table 3.35

Significant  Interactions Between Extent of Influence and  Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict handling styles with Immediate Subordinates

---

| Causes of Conflict | Extent of Influence |
| --- | --- |
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | INT (.19; .03) DOM (.15; .02) |
| Scarcity of Resources | * |
| Power Incongruence | * |
| Role Expectations | AVO (-.13; .02) |
| Role Ambiguity | AVO (-.20; .04) COM (-.17; .03) |

2

Note.    Figures  in parentheses indicate beta coefficients and R change, respectively;  * No  significant  interactions on any conflict handling style.  For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

When the respondents' extent of influence over subordinates was high, they used the integrating style more often when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less often when it was a less frequently perceived cause of conflict (Figure 3.20a).

Respondents used the avoiding style more frequently when their extent of influence was low and role expectations as a cause of conflict was more frequent, and less frequently when their extent of influence was low. The main effects of role expectations and extent of influence were not apparent (Figure 3.20b).

On the other hand, when role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the avoiding style more often when their extent of influence on subordinates was high, and less often when their extent of influence was low. However, when the extent of influence was high, respondents used the avoiding style in about the same frequency, irrespective of role ambiguity as a cause of conflict being more or less frequent (Figure 3.20c).

Respondents used the compromising style more frequently either when their extent of influence was high and role ambiguity as a cause of conflict was less frequent or when their extent of influence was low and role ambiguity was high. The converse also held true--thereby indicating the non-existence of main effects (Figure 3.20d).

Finally, respondents used the dominating style more often

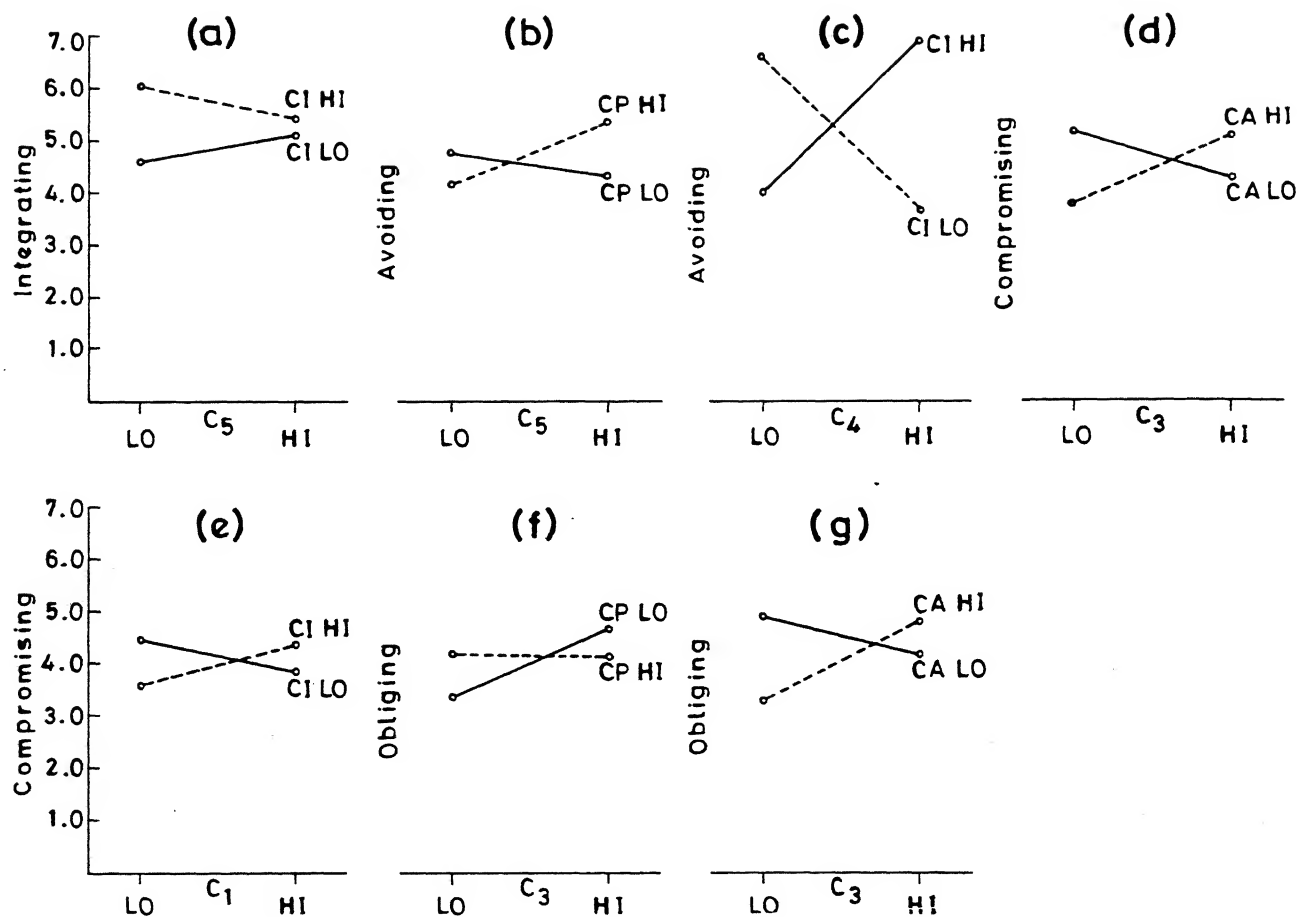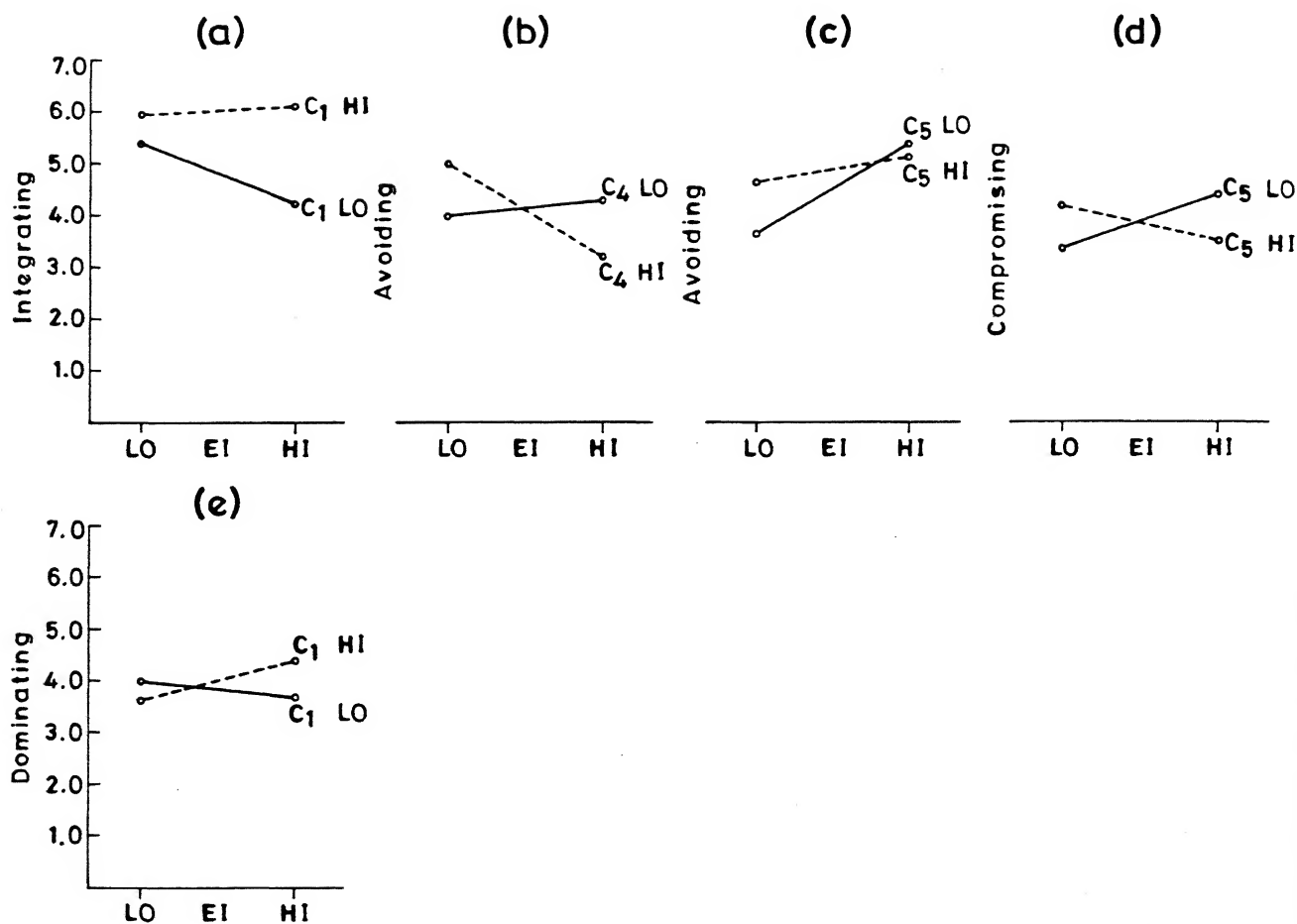<u>Figure</u> <u>3.20</u>.    Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate
                        subordinates as a function of extent of influence
                        and causes of conflict.  Abbreviations: LO = Low;
                        HI = High.  For other abbreviations, see Figure
                        3.6, Figure 3.7, and Figure 3.8).

either when their extent of influence was high and clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict was more frequent or when the extent of influence was low and clashes of values, beliefs, and interests was less frequent. The converse was also true--showing the non-existence of main effects (Figure 3.20e).

**Superior**. Regression analysis results of conflict handling styles with superior appear in Table 3.36 and the significant interactions are displayed in Figure 3.21.

The compromising style was used more often when the respondents' extent of influence over the superior was low and role expectations and role ambiguity as causes of conflict were more frequent, and less often when they were less frequently perceived causes of conflict (Figure 3.21a and Figure 3.21b).

## Demographic and Organizational Characteristics

This section examines the role of the background characteristics of the respondents and the organizational characteristics in determining the use of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates and superior. Results concerning the direct relationships are primarily based on the stepwise multiple regression analysis. The interaction effects were tested by employing a 2 x 2 (ownership by level) ANOVA of unequal $n$s.

### Demographic Characteristics

Factor analysis of personal data constrained to two factors namely, seniority and success. These factors seem to play an

Table 3.36

Significant Interactions Between Extent of Influence and Causes of Conflict on the Use of Conflict handling styles with Immediate Superior

| Causes of Conflict | Extent of Influence |
|---|---|
| Clashes of values, beliefs, and interests | * |
| Scarcity of Resources | * |
| Power Incongruence | * |
| Role Expectations | COM (-.16; .02) |
| Role Ambiguity | COM (-.17; .03) |

Note. Figures in parentheses indicates beta coefficients and $R^2$ change, respectively; * No significant interactions on any conflict handling style; For abbreviations see Table 3.11.

important role in determining the way an individual resolves conflict at the interpersonal level.

**Subordinates**. The results of multiple regression analysis appear in Table 3.37. Seniority was a significant factor in predicting the use of integrating (3% of the variance) and compromising styles (3% of the variance).
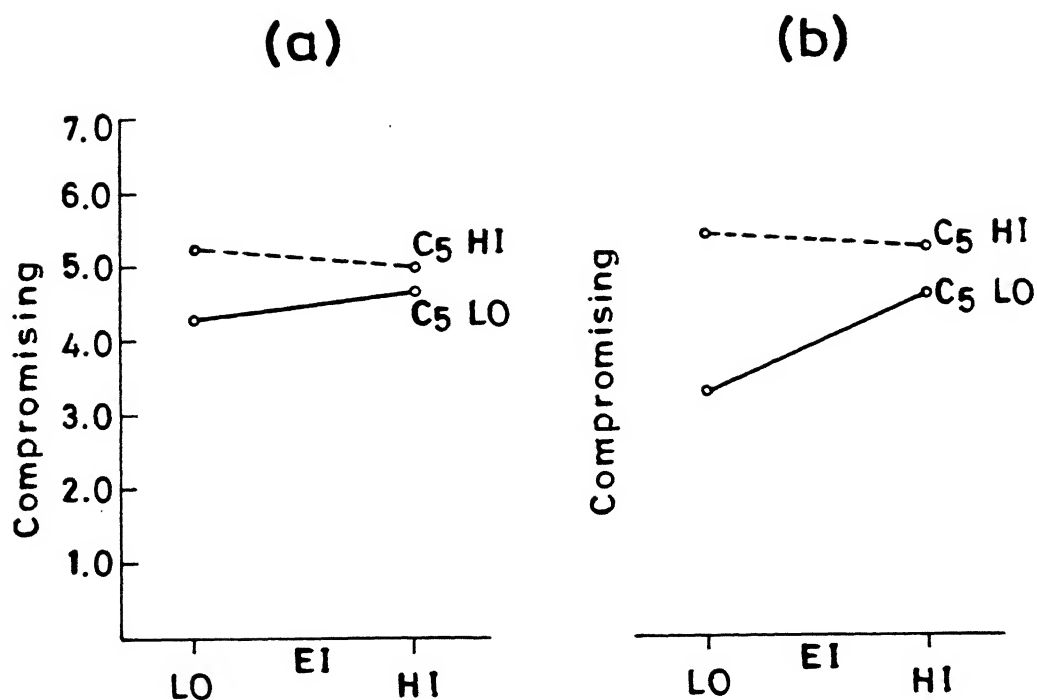
Figure 3.21. Mean conflict handling style scores with immediate superior as a function of extent of influence and causes of conflict. Abbreviations: LO = Low; HI = High. For other abbreviations, see Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7.

Success had a significant negative impact on the use of obliging style (3% of the variance).

The avoiding and dominating styles were unrelated to personal data.

**Superior**. Multiple regression analysis results appear in Table 3.38. Seniority emerged as a significant factor in predicting the use of integrating (4% of the variance) and compromising styles (1% of the variance).

Table 3.37

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Personal Data (Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterian Variables) with Immediate Subordinates

| Style | Personal Data | |
|---|---|---|
| | Seniority | Success |
| **Integrating** | | |
| R | .18 | .18 |
| $R^2$ Change | .03 | .00 |
| Beta | .18[a] | -.02 |
| Order | 1 | 2 |
| **Avoiding** | | |
| R | .13 | .09 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .01 |
| Beta | .11 | -.13 |
| Order | 2 | 1 |

Compromising

|  | | |
|---|---|---|
| R | .18 | .20 |
| $R^2$ Change | .03 | .01 |
| Beta | .22[b] | -.10 |
| Order | 1 | 2 |

Obliging

|  | | |
|---|---|---|
| R | .17 | .17 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .03 |
| Beta | .02 | -.17[a] |
| Order | 2 | 1 |

Dominating

|  | | |
|---|---|---|
| R | .09 | .08 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .01 |
| Beta | .04 | -.10 |
| Order | 2 | 1 |

---

Note. $N$ = 225; a $p$ < .05; b $p$ < .01.

The avoiding (2% of the variance) and obliging (3% of the variance) styles were significantly predicted by success. In both cases, this predictor had a negative impact.

The dominating style was unrelated to personal data.

## Organizational Characteristics

Under this head is examined the role of ownership and hierarchical levels on the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior.

Table 3.38

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Results--Personal Data
(Predictors) and Conflict Handling Styles (Criterion Variables)
with Immediate Superior

| Style | Personal Data | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Seniority | Success |
| **Integrating** | | |
| $R$ | .19 | .20 |
| $R^2$ Change | .04 | .04 |
| Beta | .17[a] | .05 |
| Order | 1 | 2 |
| **Avoiding** | | |
| $R$ | .13 | .12 |
| $R^2$ Change | .02 | .02 |
| Beta | .06 | -.15[a] |
| Order | 2 | 1 |
| **Compromising** | | |
| $R$ | .11 | .13 |
| $R^2$ Change | .01 | .01 |
| Beta | .14[a] | -.07 |
| Order | 1 | 2 |
| **Obliging** | | |
| $R$ | .19 | .18 |
| $R^2$ Change | .00 | .03 |

style was significantly predicted by ownership, whereas hierarchical level made a significant difference in the use of dominating style. Managers in the public sector reported more frequent use of the integrating style, $F = (1,221) = 10.85$, $p < .01$, as compared to those in the private sector.

Table 3.39

Effects of Hierarchical Level and Ownership on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Subordinates--Mean Scores

| Styles | Private | | Public | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low ($n = 39$) | Middle ($n = 51$) | Low ($n = 81$) | Middle ($n = 54$) |
| Integrating | 35.56 | 36.67 | 38.97 | 38.70 |
| Avoiding | 26.64 | 25.76 | 27.16 | 25.89 |
| Compromising | 16.43 | 15.82 | 16.90 | 16.61 |
| Obliging | 16.48 | 16.49 | 16.73 | 15.41 |
| Dominating | 27.92 | 28.69 | 27.09 | 24.05 |

Table 3.40

Effects of Hierarchical Level and Ownership on the Use of Conflict Handling Styles with Immediate Superior--Mean Scores

| Styles | Private | | Public | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low (n = 39) | Middle (n = 51) | Low (n = 81) | Middle (n = 54) |
| Integrating | 35.43 | 36.39 | 37.92 | 38.96 |
| Avoiding | 27.69 | 28.61 | 27.84 | 26.41 |
| Compromising | 16.71 | 16.96 | 17.42 | 17.20 |
| Obliging | 18.15 | 17.67 | 18.09 | 17.13 |
| Dominating | 26.49 | 27.39 | 24.91 | 24.87 |

# Chapter 4

## DISCUSSION

This chapter is an attempt to interpret and integrate the findings presented in the previous chapter. The first objective of this chapter is to understand the popularity of conflict handling styles in Indian organizations. The second objective is to understand the extent to which the dynamics of conflict handling styles are similar or dissimilar to the status of the target person: the immediate subordinates and the immediate superior. The discussion throws light upon the direct and interactive relationships of various predictors with conflict handling styles. The discussion also reflects upon the impact of demographic and organizational characteristics on the use of handling styles. Finally, a general conclusion is drawn in this regard.

### Prominence of Conflict Handling Styles

Under this head is examined the prominence of conflict handling styles with immediate subordinates and superior. The popularity of handling styles based on proportional mean analysis is presented in Table 4.1.

A varimax rotated factor analysis disclosed five styles of handling conflict with both the immediate subordinates and superior (see Chapter 2). None of the styles was found to be uniquely associated with the particular target--the subordinates or the superior--though there existed a slight variation in the

ordering of the styles.  An inspection of Table 4.1 suggests that

Table 4.1

Prominence of Conflict Handling Styles

| Styles | Conflict Handling Style With | |
| | Subordinates | Superior |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Most Popular | Integrating | Integrating |
| | Avoiding | Obliging |
| to | Obliging | Avoiding |
| Least Popular | Compromising | Compromising |
| | Dominating | Dominating |

integrating appears  to be the most popular style  for  handling
conflict  with  both  the  targets:  the  subordinates  and  the
superior.   The  emergence  of integrating as the  most  prominent
style  adopted by managers can be directly compared with  Rahim's
(1983)  study.   Rahim also found that integrating was  the  most
commonly  used strategy for resolving conflict with  subordinates
and  superior.   Also,  in  a study  by  Burke  (1969),  managers
described   confrontation   (i.e.,   integrating)   as   the   most
frequently  used  method for  dealing  with  superior-subordinate
conflict.   In  the Indian context, Kumar and  Srivastava  (1979)
found that managers expressed their preference for  confrontation
as  the most desirable mode of conflict  resolution.   Similarly,

Mathur and Sayeed (1978) reported that managers prefer "toning down differences" as the first measure of resolving conflict. This conclusion holds true for the present study as well.

On the other hand, the compromising and dominating styles appear to be the least preferred styles for handling conflict with both the targets. These results can be directly compared with those of Kumar and Srivastava (1979), who also found compromising and dominating as the least desirable modes. In this respect, Indian managers are not different from American managers who also view confrontation and forcing as the most and the least preferred modes of conflict resolution (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967).

Contrary to these similarities, the avoiding and the obliging styles were placed differently in the order of popularity with the two groups of target. Whereas the respondents preferred avoiding style most after the integrating style followed by obliging for handling differences with subordinates, they opted for a reverse pattern in handling differences with the superior. The emergence of obliging as the second most prominent style for resolving differences with superior gains support from Rahim's (1983) study who also found that respondents were more obliging with superior.

Though a comparison of mean differences of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior showed slight differences, the differences were statistically not significant. This implies that job status of the target does not influence the use of

conflict handling styles. This is in line with Renwicks (1975) study which indicated that status did not make any difference in the use of handling styles. On the contrary, Rahim (1986) found significant differences in the use of these style.

It is possible that individuals have a hierarchy of responses for dealing with conflicts (Berkowitz, 1962). At the top of the hierarchy is the dominant style (Blake & Mouton, 1964). This is the behavior which individuals tend to use habitually and is which is partially shaped by motives and abilities. This results in constituting a fixed pattern of responses. Considering the fact that the same respondents were responding in two different contexts, the similarities in their response style is not surprising.

As stated in Chapter 2, the data of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior were combined and a seperate factor analysis was done. A similar factor structure emerged with a slight difference in the ordering. Nevertheless, integrating was the most frequently used style for handling conflict followed by avoiding, compromising, obliging, and dominating. Rahim (1983) showed a slightly different ordering of these factors. The order was integrating, avoiding, dominating, obliging, and compromising. It is noteworthy that in all the studies managers showed preference for the integrating approach in the management of conflicts. It should be mentioned that, although the previous studies reported above differed from the present study in terms of designs and sample, the similarity in

the findings is quite encouraging and which may be considered as partial evidence for the external validity of the conflict handling measure employed in this study.

## Direct Relationships

The following section deals with the direct relationships of predictors with the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. The analysis was primarily based on stepwise multiple regression method.

## Personal Attributes and Conflict Handling Styles

The knowledge of what predisposes individuals to select one way of handling conflict over another could have immense theoretical and practical values. In the present study, the personal characteristics of the respondents were found to be a significant predictor of the use of conflict handling styles. Some similarities and dissimilarities were observed in the use of these styles as a function of the status of the target person (Figure 4.1).

Need for achievement emerged as the most significant predictor of conflict handling styles. Whereas achievement influenced the use of integrating, avoiding, and compromising styles with the superior, it influenced the integrating and obliging styles positively and dominating style negatively with subordinates. There was a consistency in the use of integrating style with both subordinates and superior. Need for independence influenced the use of obliging style in both contexts. Whereas it influenced positively the use of dominating style with

superior, it influenced negatively the use of integrating style
with subordinates. Need for power positively influenced the use

```
         Subordinates        Personal Attributes      Superior
              ¦                      .    ¦                ¦
  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  ¦   OBL (-)         ¦                        ¦   DOM             ¦
  ¦                   ¦      +---------------+ ¦                   ¦
  ¦   DOM             ¦      ¦     Power     ¦ ¦                   ¦
  ¦                   ¦------¦               ¦-¦                   ¦
  ¦                   ¦      +---------------+ ¦                   ¦
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+


  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  ¦   INT             ¦      +---------------+ ¦   INT             ¦
  ¦                   ¦      ¦               ¦ ¦                   ¦
  ¦   OBL             ¦------¦  Achievement  ¦-¦   AVO             ¦
  ¦                   ¦      ¦               ¦ ¦                   ¦
  ¦   DOM (-)         ¦      +---------------+ ¦   COM             ¦
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+


  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  ¦   INT (-)         ¦      +---------------+ ¦   OBL             ¦
  ¦                   ¦------¦ Independence  ¦-¦                   ¦
  ¦   OBL             ¦      +---------------+ ¦   DOM             ¦
  ¦                   ¦                        ¦                   ¦
  +-------------------+                        +-------------------+
```

Figure 4.1. Summary of relationships between personal attributes
            and conflict handling styles.

Note.        Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative
             impact. Abbreviations: INT = Integrating; AVO =
             Avoiding; COM = Compromising; OBL = Obliging; DOM =
             Dominating.

of dominating style in both contexts and negatively influenced the obliging style with subordinates.

Some conclusions drawn from the data are the following. High achievement oriented respondents prefer to use the integrating style quite often for resolving conflict with both subordinates and superior. This could be attributed to the fact that individuals with high need for achievement are concerned mainly with accomplishing reasonably difficult tasks and would address the underlying conflict in order to coordinate with others who are perceived to have the resources required to achieve the goals. Additionally, such persons may see confrontation of conflict and problem-solving as accomplishment of themselves and thus strive for them. This finding is expected and finds support from the study conducted by Bell and Blakeney (1977) who also found a significant positive correlation between achievement orientation and integrating style. On the contrary, Schneer and Chanin (1987) and Jones and Melcher (1982) found no relationship between the two. The apparent inconsistency in these studies may be attributed to the problem coupled with the Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) conflict handling style measure. It has been found that the measure fails to meet the required level of reliability. The proverbial nature of the instrument has also been found to elicit strong social desirability response bias (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977). However, Bass and Dunteman (1963) observed that managers who are task oriented are more interested in confronting and solving problems.

The avoiding and compromising styles were used by respondents high on achievement while resolving differences with superior. This is quite expected since the status of the target person induces compliance from the respondents who have a high desire to succeed. In the same vein, achievement oriented respondents were more obliging with subordinates. The negative relationship between achievement and dominating style in the subordinate context may be explained on the basis of the achiever's emphasis on task success. Use of domination may force the subordinates to withdraw from the situation altogether and hence hinder in the process of goal achievement.

As regards need for independence, it was found that independence oriented executives showed consistency in the use of obliging style for both subordinates and superior. Independence is characterized by a desire to be autonomous and avoid responsibility to others. It is likely that obliging others, that is, satisfying the concerns of others, is but one way to avoid responsibility to others. It was also observed that the dominating style was used more often with superior by high independence oriented executives. This is in tune with the hypothesis that the desire to overcome opposition and to do what one likes encourages individuals to become aggressive. The negative relationship between independence and integrating may be explained by the fact that as independent people avoid responsibility, they would be averse to the integrating mode since this would require some amount of committment from them.

Finally, the need for power was related to the dominating mode in both contexts, but negatively related to the obliging mode in the subordinate context. Individuals with high need for power are concerned mainly with controlling and commanding others and hence would force others to accede to their wishes. Schneer and Chanin (1987) also found a significant positive relationship between the two. However, neither Bell and Blakeney (1977) nor Jones and Melcher (1982) found support for this relationship in their studies. A significant negative relationship between need for dominance and accommodating was also observed in the Schneer and Chanin (1987) study. It is possible that persons with high need for power have the need to control others and, therefore, they would be unlikely to give into others' demand.

In sum, the findings are as consistent with our hypotheses as with some of the previous studies. As expected, a positive relationship existed between achievement and integrating and between power and dominating style. Although not predicted, a positive relationship was found between independence and obliging style. Thus, respondents showed more differences than the similarities in the use of handling styles with respect to the status of the target person(s).

## Climate and Conflict Handling Styles

Climate also emerged as a significant predictor of the use of conflict handling styles. Figure 4.2 shows the relationships between perceived climate of the organization and conflict handling styles.

Power oriented climate predicted the use of avoiding and obliging styles with both subordinates and superior. Achievement oriented climate influenced the use of integrating and avoiding styles with superior, but did not predict the use of any styles with subordinates. Similarly, independence oriented climate influenced the use of integrating and avoiding styles in both the contexts, and the dominating style in the superior context only. However, the avoiding style was negatively influenced in both the contexts. That is, the more independence oriented climate was, the less frequent was the use of avoiding style. The three climates were found to be unrelated to the use of compromising style. Similar result was obtained in the Kumar and Srivastava study (1978) in which compromise barely correlated with any organizational dimension.

As is evident from Figure 4.2, independence and power oriented climates were found to be strong predictors of conflict handling styles. In an independence oriented climate, respondents used the integrating style for resolving conflicts with subordinates and superior. It may be reasoned that in a climate that aims to overcome opposition, wants to be independent of others, and avoids obligations, respondents use the integrating style since their goals can be attained by working with both subordinates and superior. The use of integrating is intensified by the fact that the organization does not offer its members any support in attaining their goals. The negative relationship between independence oriented climate and avoiding

```
        Subordinates            Climate              Superior
             ¦                      ¦                    ¦
 ┌─────────────────────┐                      ┌─────────────────────┐
 ¦                     ¦                      ¦                     ¦
 ¦     AVO             ¦      ┌─────────────┐ ¦     AVO             ¦
 ¦                     ¦─────¦    Power     ¦─────¦                 ¦
 ¦     OBL             ¦      └─────────────┘ ¦     OBL             ¦
 ¦                     ¦                      ¦                     ¦
 └─────────────────────┘                      └─────────────────────┘


 ┌─────────────────────┐                      ┌─────────────────────┐
 ¦                     ¦                      ¦     INT             ¦
 ¦     *               ¦      ┌─────────────┐ ¦                     ¦
 ¦                     ¦─────¦ Achievement ¦─────¦                 ¦
 ¦                     ¦      └─────────────┘ ¦     AVO             ¦
 ¦                     ¦                      ¦                     ¦
 └─────────────────────┘                      └─────────────────────┘


 ┌─────────────────────┐                      ┌─────────────────────┐
 ¦     INT             ¦                      ¦     INT  .          ¦
 ¦                     ¦      ┌─────────────┐ ¦                     ¦
 ¦     AVO (-)         ¦─────¦ Independence¦─────¦  AVO (-)         ¦
 ¦                     ¦      └─────────────┘ ¦                     ¦
 ¦                     ¦                      ¦     DOM             ¦
 └─────────────────────┘                      └─────────────────────┘
```
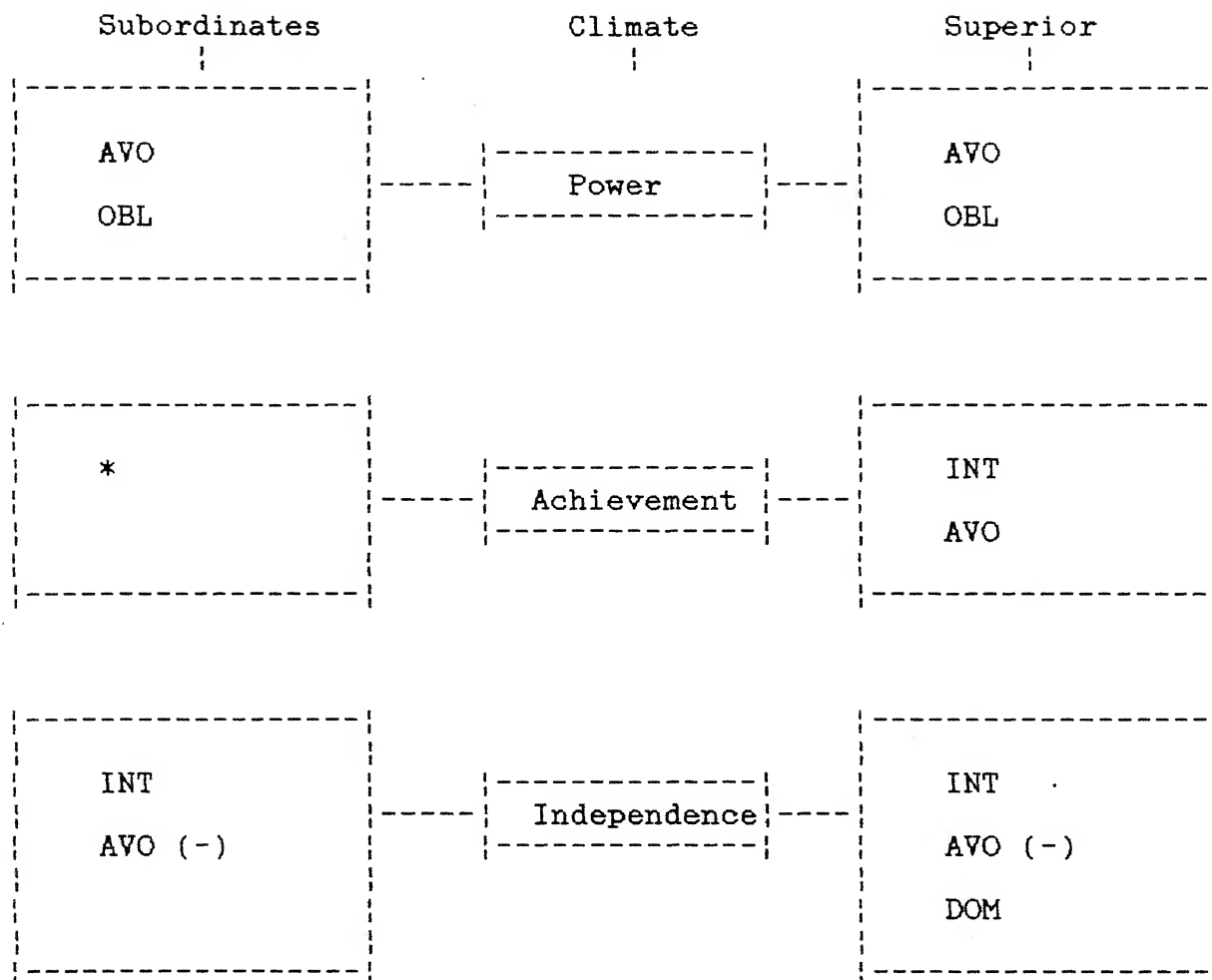
<u>Figure</u> <u>4</u>.<u>2</u>. Summary of relationships between climate and conflict
         handling styles.

<u>Note</u>.        Asterisks   indicate   absence   of   any   significant
            relationships; Negative signs in parentheses indicate
            negative  impact.  For abbreviations, see Figure 4.1.

style  may be attributed to the fact that an independent  climate

is  less likely to force its way on to the members and make  them

to withdraw from the situation.  However, the  use of  dominating

style with superior in an independent climate is rather difficult

to explain, since this climate would not encourage its members to

use assertion. It is likely that this climate may interact with targets' perceived bases of power in predicting the use of dominating style.

The avoiding and obliging styles were used for both subordinates and superior in a power oriented climate. The status of the target person made no difference in this connection. It is likely that, in a climate that directs and organizes the activities of its members, respondents tend to use the avoiding style, whereas they use the obliging style in order to win favors from/in a power oriented climate.

The integrating and avoiding styles were used frequently with superior in an achievement oriented climate. It is possible that in a climate that emphasizes on the accomplishment of difficult tasks, respondents integrate with their superior to strive for accomplishments. However, if they fail to obtain their goals by the integrating mode, they may avoid the situation altogether since there is a pressure to continually improve individual and group performance.

In sum, power was positively related to avoiding and obliging styles in both contexts. Independence was positively related to integrating and negatively related to avoiding styles. Achievement influenced the integrating and avoiding styles and independence influenced the dominating style only with superior. Thus, differences in the use of handling styles with the two groups of targets were less than the similarities.

## Bases of Power and Conflict Handling Styles

Bases of power emerged as an important predictor of conflict handling styles. It may be recalled from Chapter 2 that factor analysis results of bases of power constrained to two interpretable factors: personal (referent and expert) and organizational power (coercive, reward, and legitimate). Connection (Ansari, in press) and information power (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970) were included in the analysis considering their practical importance in business organizations.

| Subordinates | Bases | Superior |
|---|---|---|
| INT (-) <br> DOM | Information | * |
| OBL <br> DOM | Connection | AVO <br> OBL |
| * | Organizational | OBL |
| INT | Personal | INT <br><br> AVO |

Figure 4.3. Summary of relationships between bases of power and conflict handling styles.

Note. Asterisks indicate absence of any significant relationships; Negative signs in parentheses incicate negative impact. For abbreviations, see Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.3 presents a summary of the relationships between bases of power and conflict handling styles. A meaningful relationship between the two is quite apparent. That is, bases of power did make a significant impact on the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior.

Personal power significantly predicted the use of integrating style with both subordinates and superior, whereas it predicted the use of avoiding style only in the case of conflict with superior. The style remained unaffected by personal power in the subordinate context. Similarly, the compromising style was unaffected by any of the power bases in either context. It is of interest to note that connection power affected two of the conflict handling styles in each context. Whereas it influenced the use of obliging style in both the contexts, it influenced the use of avoiding style in the superior and dominating style in the subordinate contexts. The information base of power negatively influenced the use of integrating style and positively influenced the use of dominating style with subordinates. It may be pointed out that though information power was not seen to be related to any conflict handling styles with superior, it may interact with personal and contextual variables in determining the use of conflict handling styles. Similarly, the obliging style was influenced by organizational power in the superior context but remained unaffected in the subordinate context.

The perception of a particular power base of the target person induces the respondents to use a set of styles. For

example, perceiving the target to have personal power does not imply the use of integrating style only but also the use of avoiding style. Similarly, avoiding style may be used when the target has connection power. It is important to note that there were variations in the use of these styles depending upon the status of the target person.

Integrating style was used with both subordinates and superior when targets were perceived to have personal power. It may be reasoned that in order to attain their goals, respondents may integrate their efforts with those whom they identify with and perceive them to have the knowledge and expertise. Charisma, personal magnetism, and expertise are the sources of personal power. The targets' apparent expertise compels the respondents to use rational and problem-solving methods for resolving conflict. This result is supported by the study of Jamieson and Thomas (1974) who also found that the teachers' referent power induced collaboration by graduate students. The explanation holds true for the use of avoiding style with the superior as well. Here, the status of the target person (superior) may prevent individuals from addressing some underlying conflicts, though they may identify with the person concerned. On the other hand, they may avoid conflict simply because of their personal liking for the person.

The obliging style was used by respondents for both subordinates and superior when targets were perceived to have connection power. Probably, in the Indian context, this base of

power is more salient (Ansari, in press), since one of the dominant modes of power expression in Indians is power through proximity with powerful others (McClelland, 1975). Satisfying the concerns of a powerful other gives the respondents a feeling of powerfulness.

Apart from the similarity in the use of integrating and dominating styles, it was found that respondents used the avoiding style with superior and dominating style with subordinates when targets were perceived to have connection power. Here again the status of the target person plays a crucial role in determining one's response style. Similarly, the status of the respondents relative to that of the target determines the course of action to be taken. As subordinates, the respondents are not in a position to exert influence over powerful others; hence they use the avoiding mode, whereas as superior they exercise control to gain from the targets' connections with important persons. Though there are no studies associating connection power with conflict handling styles, it has been found to play a crucial role in determining the use of influence tactics with subordinates and superior (Ansari, in press).

The negative relationship between subordinates' information power and integrating style and positive relationship between information and dominating style may be explained on the basis of the status of the target person. Respondents may be averse to accepting information from subordinates because of hierarchical

seniority and are less likely to integrate but more likely to dominate.

Finally, respondents used the obliging style when the superior was perceived to have organizational power. Organizational power constitutes the superior's legitimate right to deal with the use of punishments and rewards. In order to win favors (rewards), respondents attempt to satisfy the concerns of their superior. This power base did not predict the use of any style in the subordinate context.

## Causes of Conflict and Conflict Handling Styles

The frequency with which a particular cause of conflict occurs may also determine the action taken by the parties to resolve conflicts. Figure 4.4 shows the summary of relationships between causes of conflict and conflict handling styles.

As is evident, clashes of values, beliefs, and interests as a cause of conflict negatively influenced the use of integrating style with subordinates. That is, the more frequent were the clashes of values, beliefs, and interests between the respondents and their subordinates the less frequent was the use of integrating style. It may be reasoned that since integrating requires that the parties confront each other, collaborate, and exchange ideas, it is less likely for respondents to adopt this style when their values, beliefs, and interests are not congruent with those of the subordinates. This finding is in line with that of Thomas and Walton (1971), who also found that managers

were more competitive and avoidant when conflict of interest was prevalent.

The avoiding style was used by respondents when they perceived role ambiguity as a cause of conflict with the superior. Role ambiguity refers to the lack of clarity in understanding what expectations exist for a given role. Taking the status of the target person into consideration, it is very likely that a person will avoid such a situation. This finding is thus in the expected direction and gains support from the studies by Kahn et al. (1964) who found that a very frequent behavioral response to role conflict was withdrawal or avoidance of those who are seen as creating the conflict.

The avoiding and obliging styles were used with subordinates and obliging and dominating styles with the superior when the cause of conflict was power incongruence. It is interesting to note a sharp contrast in the use of handling styles with subordinates and superior. It is likely that when respondents perceived unequal distribution of power with subordinates, that is, whether he was high or low in terms of power relative to that of the respondents, they tended to adopt the avoiding mode. However, when avoiding was not feasible they adopted the obliging mode. Similarly, in the case of handling conflict with superior, it is possible that respondents used the obliging style when the superior was perceived to be high on power, and the dominating style when power was perceived to be low. On the other hand, it

```
        Subordinate              Causes of Conflict           Superior
             |                           |                        |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
|                      |   | Clashes of values, |   |                      |
|     INT (-)          |---| beliefs, and       |---|         *            |
|                      |   | interest           |   |                      |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------


 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
|                      |   |                    |   |                      |
|       *              |---| Scarcity of        |---|         *            |
|                      |   | resources          |   |                      |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------


 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
|     AVO              |   |                    |   |        OBL            |
|                      |---| Power incongruence |---|                      |
|     OBL              |   |                    |   |        DOM            |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------


 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
|                      |   |                    |   |                      |
|       *              |---| Role expectations  |---|         *            |
|                      |   |                    |   |                      |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------


 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
|                      |   |                    |   |                      |
|     DOM              |---| Role ambiguity     |---|        AVO            |
|                      |   |                    |   |                      |
 ---------------------     ---------------------     ---------------------
```
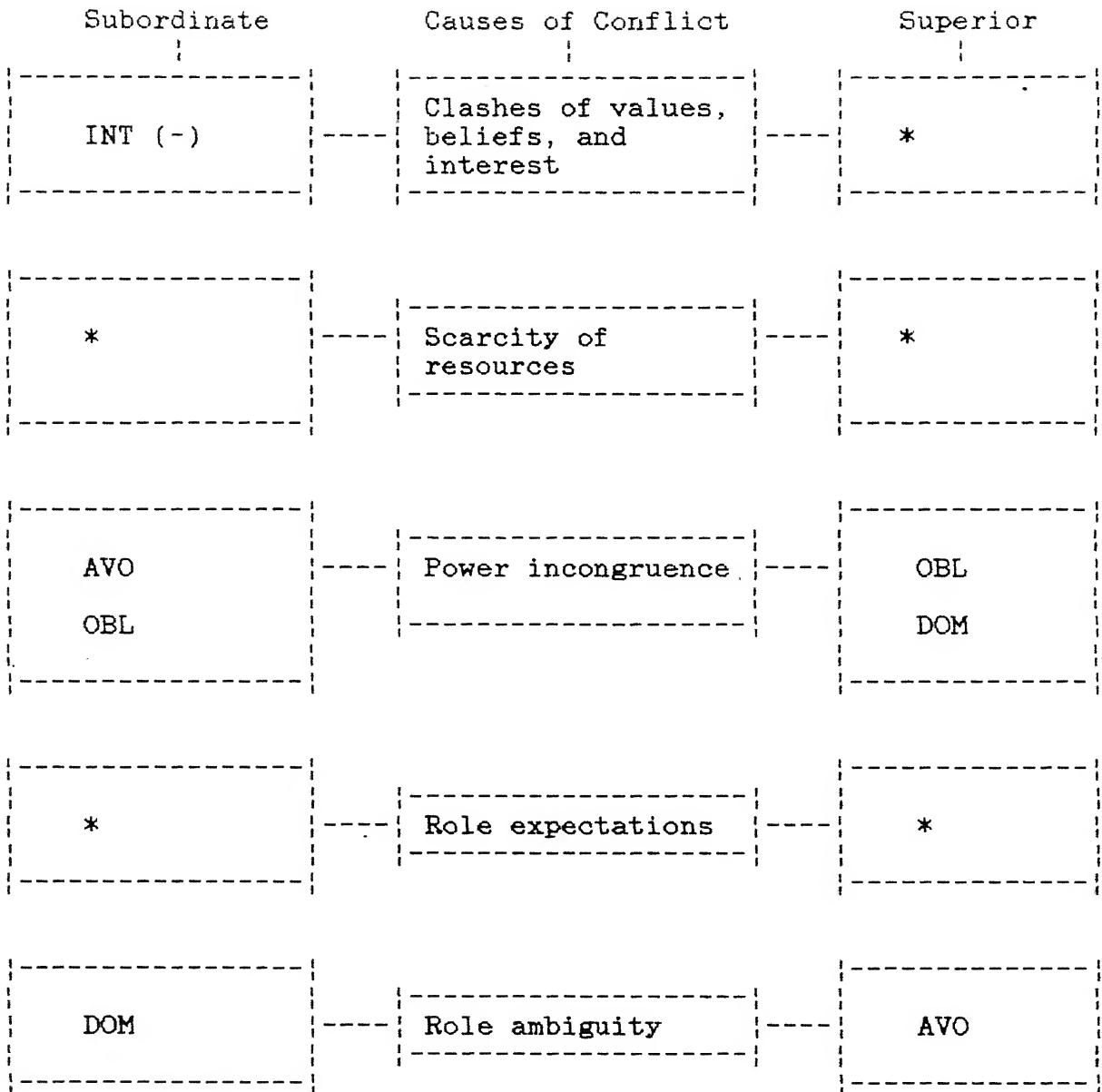
**Figure 4.4.** Summary of relationships between causes of conflict and conflict handling styles.

Note. Asterisks indicate absence of any significant relationships; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. For abbreviations, see **Figure 4.1.**

is possible that executives first use softer modes and then resort to stronger modes, such as dominating. Thus the

distribution and the forms of power may influence the conflict behavior within a relationship (Kabanoff, 1985, 1987). Though the literature in the area of organizational conflict is sorely lacking in these terms, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the nature of people's influence relations affect the influence tactics they use (e.g., Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980).

## Interactive Relationships

The interactions between the various sets of predictors significantly predicted the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. Some similarities and differences regarding the determinants of conflict handling styles with respect to the target groups were observed. This section presents these findings and their interpretations.

## Personal Attributes by Climate Interactions

Personal dispositions of the respondents and the perceived climate of the organization interacted significantly in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. A summary of these relationships is presented in Figure 4.5.

As stated earlier (Chapter 1), one of the prime objectives of this study was to see the match between the personal orientations of the respondents and perceived organizational climate. As is evident from Figure 4.5, there were two matches (person-climate). Need for independence matched with independence oriented climate in predicting the use of obliging style with both subordinates and superior. It may be reasoned

```
  Subordinates                                           Superior
       |                                                    |
       |                                                    |
 !---------------------!             !----------------------!
 !  INT (-)            !             !          *           !
 !                     !   !-----------------!              !
 !  OBL (-)            !---!   PI  X  CP      !----!         !
 !                     !   !-----------------!    !         !
 !---------------------!                          !---------!


 !---------------------!                          !---------!
 !                     !                          !         !
 !  AVO                !   !-----------------!    !    *    !
 !                     !---!   PI  X  CA      !---!         !
 !  OBL                !   !-----------------!    !         !
 !---------------------!                          !---------!


 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!
 !  OBL                !---!   PI  X  CI      !---!  OBL    !
 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!


 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!
 !  AVO                !---!   PP  X  CA      !---!  DOM (-)!
 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!


 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!
 !  OBL (-)            !---!   PP  X  CP      !---!    *    !
 !  DOM                !   !-----------------!    !         !
 !---------------------!                          !---------!


 !---------------------!   !-----------------!    !---------!
 !                     !   !   PA  X  CA      !---!  INT (-)!
 !    *                !---!-----------------!    !  COM (-)!
 !                     !                          !  DOM (-)!
 !                     !                          !  OBL (-)!
 !---------------------!                          !---------!
```
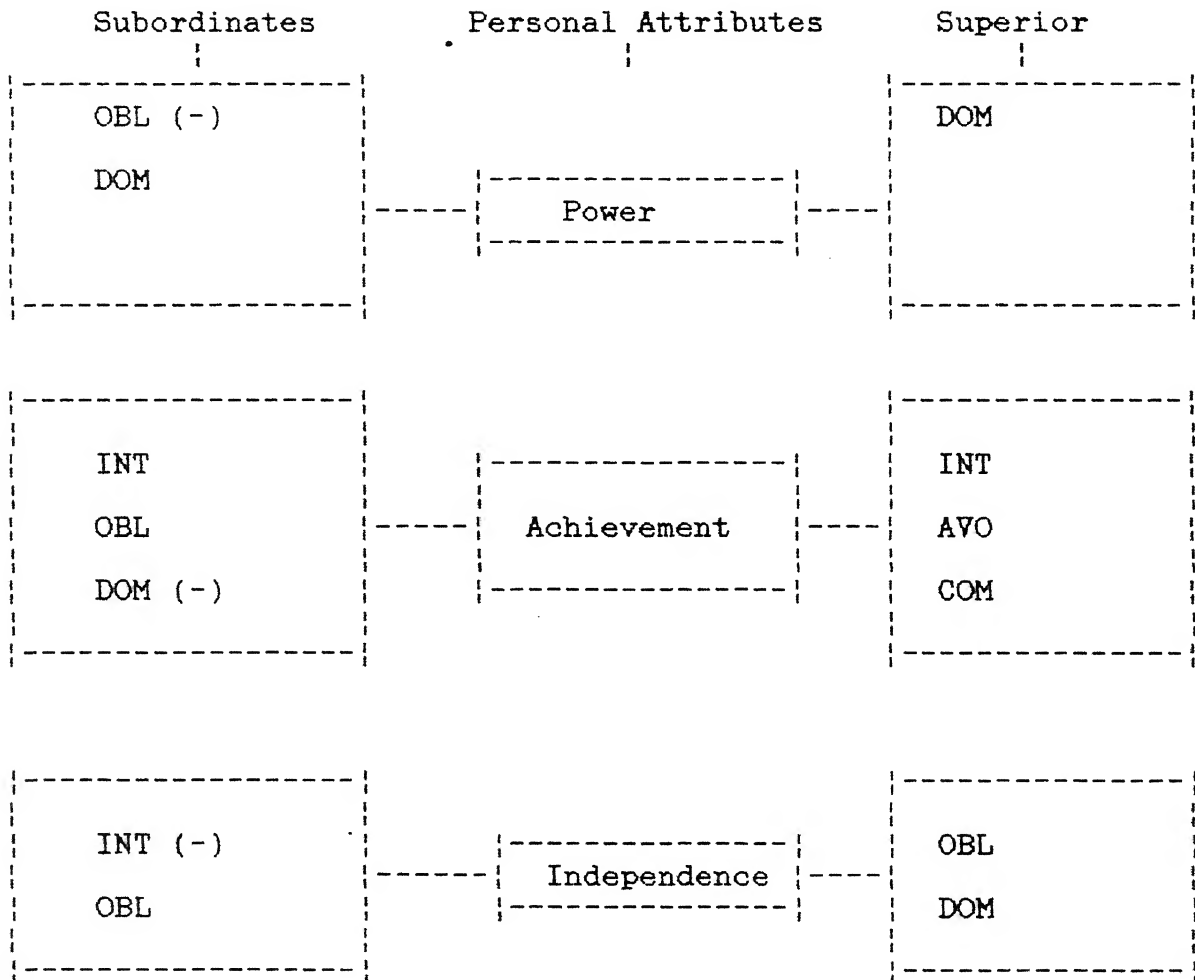
<u>Figure</u> <u>4</u>.<u>5</u>. Summary of relationships between personal  attributes
         <u>vs</u> climate and conflict handling styles.

<u>Note</u>.        Asterisks   indicate  no  significant   interactions;
         Negative  signs  in  parentheses  indicate   negative
         impact.   Abbreviations: PI = Personal  Independence;
         PP = Personal Power; PA = Personal Achievement; CI  =
         Independence  Oriented Climate; CP =  Power  Oriented
         Climate;  CA  = Achievement Oriented Climate;   INT  =
         Integrating; AVO = Avoiding; COM = Compromising;  OBL
         = Obliging; DOM = Dominating.

that in a climate that strives to be autonomous and to overcome opposition, respondents high on independence orientation attempt to satisfy the concerns of others in order to reduce their chances of taking responsibility or obligations and facing opposition which is supported by the climate.

Similarly, power oriented executives used the dominating style more frequently with subordinates in a high power oriented climate. However, this match was not visible for any handling styles with superior. Probably, the position power of the superior makes it unlikely for subordinates to employ the dominating mode in a climate that encourages the use of power. Power oriented executives are concerned mainly with controlling and commanding others and, therefore, would try to force others to give into their demands. Their actions are supported by a climate that encourages the exercise of power. However, obliging was negatively related to both power orientation of the person and the climate. Because of their need to control others, executives would be unlikely to smooth over differences (Schneer & Chanin, 1987) with subordinates in a power oriented climate. However, respondents high on need for power used the dominating style with superior in a low achievement oriented climate. It is possible that subordinates are able to express themselves assertively with superior because the climate does not push its members to accomplish their goals.

Achievement orientation of the respondents interacted with achievement oriented climate in predicting the use of

integrating, compromising, obliging, and dominating styles with superior. Though these interactions were significant, they were not matched since the paired dimensions (person-climate) were not identical. That is, low achievement oriented respondents were more integrating in a high achievement oriented climate. On the other hand, high achievement oriented respondents were more compromising, obliging, and dominating in a low achievement oriented climate. Low achievers are less concerned about their work performance and accomplishments but since their climate emphasizes upon improving work performance and accomplishing difficult tasks, they have no option but to integrate their efforts with their superior. The status of the target person makes it difficult for them to adopt any other mode. High achievers, on the other hand, emphasize upon work performance, task accomplishment, and strive to attain their goals and, hence, try a combination of styles. It is possible that they initiate the process of resolution with softer modes and then resort to stronger modes. Since achievement is the dominant need, managers attempt to accomplish everything by themselves. They are reluctant to delegate and fail to develop a strong sense of responsibility and commitment among subordinates (McClelland & Burnham, 1976) and hence use the dominating mode which is facilitated by the climates' lack of initiativeness.

It is important to note that achievement orientation did not interact with any dimension of climate in predicting the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates. Jones and Melcher

(1982) have explained this finding in terms of the high achiever's emphasis on task success. The high achiever has no preference for a particular style, but rather chooses the style that will be successful given the characteristics of the situation or climate.

Need for independence interacted with all the three dimensions of climate in predicting the use of integrating, avoiding, and obliging styles with subordinates. Respondents low on independence orientation were more integrating in a high power oriented climate and more avoiding in a low achievement oriented climate. Low independence oriented persons would not be averse to responsibility and dependence and since their climate supports the exercise of power they would more likely integrate with subordinates. Because of their low preference to do things on their own, low independence oriented respondents would more frequently use the avoiding mode in a climate that is unconcerned with task accomplishments.

On the contrary, high independence oriented executives used the obliging style with subordinates in high power and achievement oriented climates. It may be reasoned that respondents satisfy the concerns of others (subordinates) because they want to avoid responsibility and commitment to a climate that controls and directs the activities of its members or in a climate that stresses on attaining difficult goals. This interaction effect was not apparent for superior probably because addressing a conflict situation requires engaging in resolution

with others and, thus, autonomous people would seek to avoid the situation altoghether (Schneer & Chanin, 1987).

## Personal Attributes by Bases of Power Interactions

The targets' perceived bases of power and the respondents' personal dispositions interacted significantly in predicting the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. Figure 4.6 presents a summary of these relationships.

As is evident, need for power interacted with targets' information, organizational, and connection power in predicting the use of integrating, avoiding, and dominating styles with subordinates. The power oriented respondents used the integrating style when subordinates had high information power and dominating style when they had low connection power. The desire to control others may be suppressed by the respondents' desire to extract information. Because subordinates derive power through control over vital information, they are restricted in the exercise of power and hence use the integrating style. Similarly, when the subordinates' chances of using their connections to influence the superior were less, respondents used the dominating style because of their position power and the desire to feel powerful.

The avoiding style was used by low power oriented executives when subordinates were perceived to possess high organizational power. People low in need for power lack assertiveness and self-confidence necessary to organize and direct group activities; therefore, they resort to the avoiding mode when the targets'

position  in the organization grants the right to remove  rewards
and administer punishments.

Need for achievement interacted with·connection and personal

Subordinates                                    Superior

| INT | | PP  X  IN | | * |
|-----|---|-----------|---|---|

| AVO (-) | | PP  X  OR | | * |
|---------|---|-----------|---|---|

| DOM (-) | | PP  X  CO | | * |
|---------|---|-----------|---|---|

| * | | PP  X  PE | | * |
|---|---|-----------|---|---|

| INT (-) <br> DOM (-) | | PA  X  PE | | * |
|----------------------|---|-----------|---|---|

| DOM (-) <br> COM (-) <br> OBL (-) | | PA  X  CO | | OBL |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|---|-----|

| * | | PA  X  OR | | * |
|---|---|-----------|---|---|

| * | | PA  X  IN | | DOM |
|---|---|-----------|---|-----|

| AVO (-) <br> COM (-) | | PI  X  PE | | * |
|----------------------|---|-----------|---|---|

```
:-------------------:   :-------------------:   :-------------------:
:                   :   :                   :   :                   :
:     AVO (-)       :---:    PI  X  OR      :---:        *          :
:                   :   :                   :   :                   :
:-------------------:   :-------------------:   :-------------------:

:-------------------:   :-------------------:   :-------------------:
:                   :   :                   :   :                   :
:        *          :---:    PI  X  CO      :---:       DOM         :
:                   :   :                   :   :                   :
:-------------------:   :-------------------:   :-------------------:

:-------------------:   :-------------------:   :-------------------:
:     AVO (-)       :   :                   :   :                   :
:     OBL (-)       :---:    PI  X  IN      :---:        *          :
:                   :   :-------------------:   :                   :
:-------------------:                           :-------------------:
```

Figure 4.6. Summary of relationships between personal attributes vs bases of power and conflict handling styles.

Note.      Asterisks indicate no significant interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. Abbreviations: PE = Personal Power; OR = Organizational Power; IN = Information Power; CO = Connection Power. For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5.

power in predicting the use of all but the avoiding style with subordinates. High achievers used integrating and dominating styles when the subordinates had low personal power. Expertise, charisma, and personal magnetism constitute the personal power. It may be reasoned that since high achievers are concerned mainly with their own standards of work performance, they coordinate with those who can facilitate the process of goal attainment. If coordination does not result in the desired goal, they may force their own rules for attaining it. Lack of identification with and low expertise on the part of the subordinates act as facilitating factors.

High achievers also used the dominating style when connection power of the subordinates was perceived to be low. When these contacts are neglegible, respondents may force their

own rules for obtaining the goals.

On the contrary, low achievers used compromising and obliging styles when the subordinates had high connection power. It is likely that low achievers use softer modes for resolving conflict mainly because of their unconcerned attitude toward task-accomplishment and fear of subordinates using their connections as a form of counterpower.

With superior, high achievers were found to be more obliging when he was perceived to have high connection power. High achievers attempt to win favors and may seek proximity with powerful persons and who can provide the resources required for goal attainment.

Need for independence interacted with all but the connection base of power in determining the use of avoiding, compromising, and obliging styles with subordinates and dominating style with the superior. The need for independence includes a desire to avoid submission to authority figures as well as preference to do things in one's own way. Respondents low on this need used the avoiding and compromising styles when subordinates had high personal power. Because of their feelings of shared identity and the target's expertise, respondents used the avoiding mode in order to prevent conflict from aggravating. Similarly, they used the compromising mode because of low aversion to responsibility and submission. Executives used the avoiding style more frequently when subordinates possessed high organizational and information power. When subordinates have exclusive access to

information and are in a position to harm their superior by holding back rewards, respondents sought to use the avoiding mode for resolving conflict because of their low striving to face opposition and meet challenges. The mere fact that subordinates have substantial power to affect the superior's outcome usually serves as a restraint and hence the use of avoiding style.

Finally, high autonomy (i.e., independence) seeking respondents used the obliging style when subordinates had low information power, and dominating style when the superior had high connection power. By satisfying the concerns of subordinates who lack access to vital information, respondents reduce the chances of taking responsibility which would inhibit their activities. The second finding seems difficult to explain, since it is less likely for subordinates to use coercion with superior especially when he has connections inside or outside the organization.

## Personal Attributes by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The frequency of disagreements or clashes taking place between the parties involved and the personal characteristics of the respondents interacted significantly in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. A summary of these relationships is given in figure 4.7.

Need for independence interacted with the degree of conflict in predicting the use of integrating and avoiding styles with immediate subordinates. This effect was not visible in the immediate superior context. Since conflict was not frequent,

respondents (as superior) used the integrating style for preventing the conflict from aggravating which would otherwise increase their responsibilities. However, when integrating was not feasible or possible, they avoided the situation altogether.

When the degree of conflict with the superior was perceived more frequently, respondents high on need for power made more

```
      Subordinates                                        Superior
           |                                                  |
 .------------------.    .------------------.    .------------------.
 |                  |    |                  |    |                  |
 |    INT (-)       |----|    PI  X  DC     |----|        *         |
 |    AVO (-)       |    |                  |    |                  |
 |                  |    .------------------.    |                  |
 .------------------.                            .------------------.


 .------------------.    .------------------.    .------------------.
 |                  |    |                  |    |                  |
 |        *         |----|    PP  X  DC     |----|    INT (-)       |
 |                  |    |                  |    |    AVO           |
 |                  |    .------------------.    |                  |
 .------------------.                            .------------------.


 .------------------.    .------------------.    .------------------.
 |                  |    |                  |    |                  |
 |        *         |----|    PA  X  DC     |----|    COM           |
 |                  |    |                  |    |                  |
 .------------------.    .------------------.    .------------------.
```

<u>Figure 4.7</u>. Summary of relationships between personal attributes <u>vs</u> degree of conflict and conflict handling styles.

<u>Note</u>.     Asterisks indicate no significant interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact; Abbreviation: DC = Degree of Conflict. For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5.

frequent use of avoiding style, whereas those low on this orientation made more frequent use of the integrating style. Power orientation is characterized by the desire to feel powerful or to have control over others. However, the status of the target person (superior) restrains the respondents from expressing coercion which would only accelarate the frequency of conflicts. This interaction was not apparent in the subordinate

context probably because power oriented persons would less likely perceive conflict with their subordinates.

On the other hand, low power oriented respondents used the integrating style when the conflict was frequent with the superior. Because such persons lack the assertiveness required to direct group activities, they coordinate with their superior to resolve conflicts.

Finally, high achievers used the compromising style when conflict was frequent with the superior. By compromising respondents were able to derive favors from the one who has the resources required for task accomplishment while at the same time giving in something to resolve the conflict.

Personal Attributes by Extent of Influence Interactions

The extent to which the respondents had influence over the target person interacted significantly with their (respondents') personal characteristics in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. Figure 4.8 shows a summary of these relationships.

As is evident, high power oriented executives made more frequent use of avoiding style when their influence over subordinates was high. Though this finding was difficult to interpret, it may be reasoned that because of their power and influence respondents were not compelled to confront conflict and, hence, they used the avoiding style.

Similarly, executives high on independence orientation employed the obliging style more frequently when their influence

over the superior was high. Such persons are more concerned about their independence and would avoid anything that restricts their activities. Therefore, they satisfy the concerns of others inspite of having influence over them in order to be free of obligations.

```
      Subordinates                                Superior
            |                                        |
!------------------!  !------------------!  !------------------!
!                  !  !                  !  !                  !
!       AVO        !--!   PP  X  EI      !--!        *         !
!                  !  !                  !  !                  !
!------------------!  !------------------!  !------------------!


!------------------!  !------------------!  !------------------!
!                  !  !                  !  !                  !
!        *         !--!   PI  X  EI      !--!       OBL        !
!                  !  !                  !  !                  !
!------------------!  !------------------!  !------------------!
```

Figure  4.8.        Summary of relationships between personal
                    attributes vs extent of influence and conflict
                    handling styles.

Note.               Asterisks indicate no significant
                    interactions. Abbreviation: EI = Extent of
                    Influence. For other abbreviations, see
                    Figure 4.5.


## Personal Attributes by Causes of Conflict Interactions

Conflict handling styles were significantly predicted by the interactions of personal attributes of the respondents with the causes of conflict. A summary of these relationships is shown in Figure 4.9.

Needs for independence and power interacted with causes of conflict in predicting the use of integrating and obliging styles with subordinates. Low independence oriented executives used the integrating style more frequently when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests were a frequent cause of conflict with

subordinates. Since such persons are more likely to give into the demands of others, integrating style seems to be an appropriate style to resolve differences with the subordinates. Similarly, power oriented executives used the integrating style more frequently when the scarcity of resources was a frequent cause of conflict. It is likely that the desire to dominate is suppressed when resources are scarce. This finding can be explained in game theory framework. Since dominating results in a win-lose situation, respondents prefer to use integrating style which results in a win-win situation.

The needs-causes of conflict interactions predicted the use of all handling styles in the superior context. It is possible that respondents try a number of ways to resolve conflicts with the superior depending upon the causes of conflict. Power oriented executives used the integrating style more frequently when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests with the superior was a less frequent cause of conflict. By integrating with superior respondents may get a feeling of being powerful at the time of resolving conflicts. In the same vein, power oriented executives used the compromising style more frequently when scarcity of resources with the superior was a frequent cause of conflict and dominating style when role ambiguity as a cause was more frequent. In the former case, the respondents' exercise of power is constrained both by the scarcity of resources and the fact that they are interacting with the superior. Compromising remains the only feasible way in which the respondents are able

```
      Subordinates                                        Superior
          |                                                  |
 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |    INT (-)      |---- |  PI   X   C1    |---- |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     |                 |     |  COM (-)        |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PP   X   C1    |---- |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |      INT        |---- |  PP   X   C2    |---- |  COM            |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PP   X   C3    |---- |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PP   X   C4    |---- |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,                             ,-----------------,
 |       *         |                             |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     ,-----------------,      |  AVO (-)        |
 |                 |---- |  PP   X   C5    |---- |  DOM            |
 |                 |     '-----------------'      |                 |
 '-----------------'                             '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PA   X   C2    |---- |  DOM            |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PA   X   C3    |---- |  OBL            |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PA   X   C4    |---- |  OBL            |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'

 ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,     ,-----------------,
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 |       *         |---- |  PA   X   C5    |---- |  INT (-)        |
 |                 |     |                 |     |                 |
 '-----------------'     '-----------------'     '-----------------'
```

Figure 4.9.     Summary of relationships between personal
                attributes _vs_   causes  of   conflict and
                conflict handling styles.

Note.          Asterisks indicate no significant interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. Abbreviations: C1 = Clashes of values, Beliefs, and Interests; C2 = Scarcity of Resources; C3 = Power Incongruence; C4 = Role Expectations; C5 = Role Ambiguity. For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5.

to obtain some amount of resources. In the latter case, the respondents are able to exercise power because of the ambiguities of the situation and role demands. Specified role demands would restrain the respondents' actions due to status differences.

The integrating style was used more frequently by power oriented executives when power incongruence, role expectations, and role ambiguity were the less frequently perceived causes of conflict. It may be pointed out that, irrespective of the causes of conflict, the status of the respondents as subordinates does not allow them to use strong modes and thus they integrate in resolving conflicts with the superior.

Respondents low on power orientation used the avoiding mode more frequently when role ambiguity with the superior was a frequent cause of conflict. In this case, the status of the target person, poorly defined role expectations, and the respondents' lack of desire to control jointly contribute to the use of avoiding style.

High achievement oriented executives used dominating and obliging styles more frequently with their superior when scarcity of resources, power incongruence, and role expectations were the frequently perceived causes of conflict. Since goal attainment

## Climate by Bases of Power Interactions

Interactions between perceived climate of the organization and the targets' perceived bases of power interacted significantly in predicting the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. A summary of these relationships is shown in Figure 4.10.

Achievement and independence oriented climates interacted with the targets' organizational power in predicting the use of dominating style with subordinates. In a climate that pressurizes its members to accomplish difficult tasks, it is likely that respondents would drive the subordinates hard to attain organizational objectives. Due to the organizations' over emphasis on achievement, subordinates are unable to exercise organizational power (coercion, reward, and legitimate) to counter the superiors' actions. Similarly, in a climate that strives to overcome opposition and avoids submission to authority, respondents are able to exercise power inspite of the subordinates' capability to use rewards and punishments as forms of counterpower.

On the other hand, climate-bases of power interactions predicted the use of all but integrating style with the superior. In a high independence oriented climate, respondents used the obliging and compromising styles when the superior was perceived to possess both personal and organizational power. It may be argued that when the superior is perceived to have the right to punish or reward, then in a climate that does not encourage

contradictions it would be more likely that respondents would satisfy the concerns of others in order to secure rewards and avoid punishment.

In the same climate, respondents used compromising and obliging styles when superior had personal power (expert and referent). It is likely that respondents' identification with the superior and the perception that he has expertise in a particular area induces them to use softer modes of conflict resolution.

The avoiding style was used in a low independence oriented climate when the superior was perceived to have high connection power. Because the possibility of getting support from the climate was low and the superior had connections with influential persons, respondents resolved conflict by avoiding the situation.

High achievement oriented climate interacted with high connection power in predicting the use of dominating style with the superior. When respondents perceive their superior to have connections which may enhance their prospects of goal achievement, they use the dominating style because of the continuous pressure from the climate to attain goals and improve work performance. Contrary to this, low achievement oriented climate interacted with low information power in predicting the use of obliging style with superior. Because the climate is unconcerned about achievement, the possibility of its extracting information is less; therefore, the respondents prefer to oblige in order to derive some of the vital information on which the superior has control.

```
        Subordinates                                        Superior

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |      DOM         |---- |   CA  X  OR      |---- |        *         |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CA  X  IN      |---- |      OBL         |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CA  X  CO      |---- |      DOM         |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |      DOM         |---- |   CI  X  OR      |---- |      OBL         |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CI  X  CO      |---- |    AVO (-)       |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CI  X  PE      |---- |      COM         |
 |                  |     +------------------+     |      OBL         |
 +------------------+                              +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CP  X  OR      |---- |    DOM (-)       |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+

 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
 |       *          |---- |   CP  X  CO      |---- |    DOM (-)       |
 +------------------+     +------------------+     +------------------+
```

Figure 4.10.    Summary  of relationships between climate vs
                bases of power and conflict handling styles.

Note.           Asterisks indicate no significant interactions;
                Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative
                impact.  For abbreviations, see Figure 4.5  and
                Figure 4.6.

Power oriented climate interacted with connection and
organizational power in predicting the use of dominating style
with the superior. It may be argued that respondents dominated
because the climate encouraged its members to use power and

control and the superior's reaction was contrained by their having low organizational and connection power.

## Climate by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The perceived climate of the organization and the degree to which disagreement took place between the parties accounted for a significant amount of variance in the use of conflict handling styles. Figure 4.11 shows a summary of these relationships.

As is evident, in a high power oriented climate, respondents used avoiding and compromising styles when the degree of conflict with subordinates was perceived to be low. It is likely that by using the avoiding style respondents attempt to prevent the aggravation of conflict in a climate that encourages its members to exercise power and control. However, when avoiding is not possible they may use the give-and-take method

```
    Subordinates                              Superior
          |                                      |
 |------------------|   |------------------|  |------------------|
 |    AVO (-)       |---|    CP  X  DC      |--|    AVO (-)       |
 |------------------|   |------------------|  |------------------|


 |------------------|   |------------------|  |------------------|
 |      *           |---|    CI  X  DC      |--|    COM (-)       |
 |------------------|   |------------------|  |------------------|
```

Figure 4.11. Summary of relationships between climate vs degree of conflict and conflict handling styles.

Note. Asterisks indicate no significant interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. DC = Degree of Conflict; For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5.

(i.e., compromising) for resolving conflicts.

On the other hand, respondents used the compromising style

when the degree of conflict with superior was perceived to be low and climate was perceived to be high independence oriented. In a climate that discourages opposition and strives to have its own way, the possibility of respondents resolving conflict on their own is less and, thus, they use the compromising style more frequently.

Finally, when the degree of conflict with superior was perceived to be high, respondents used the avoiding style in a high power oriented climate. Respondents were avoiding because the climate would encourage its members to use coercive methods when conflict was a frequent occurrence. The status of the target person also compels the subordinates to use non-coercive modes like avoiding and compromising for resolving the conflict.

## Climate by Extent of Influence Interactions

The perceived climate interacted significantly with the respondents' extent of influence in determining the use of conflict handling styles with subordinates and superior. Figure 4.12 shows a summary of these relationships.

High power oriented climate interacted with respondents' low extent of influence in predicting the use of integrating style with both subordinates and superior. Status of the target person did not make any difference in this regard. It is likely that in a climate that encourages its members to exercise power and control, respondents used the integrating style to gain support from those on whom they had low influence.

In low independence and achievement climates, respondents used the compromising mode when their extent of influence over subordinates was low. By using the compromising mode, executives having low influence are able to win favors in a climate that otherwise avoids responsibilities and obligations. In a low achievement oriented climate, the compromising style is used because respondents' capacity to influence decisions is low and the climate is also non-result oriented.

On the contrary, in a high independence oriented climate, respondents used obliging, compromising, and dominating styles when their influence over the superior was perceived to be high. It may be reasoned that in a climate that encourages its members to overcome opposition, respondents used the dominating style to exert their influence over superior for resolving conflicts.

```
     Subordinates                                    Superior
          |                                             |
 ----------------     ----------------     ----------------
|                |   |                |   |                |
|    INT (-)     |--|    CP  X  EI    |---|    INT (-)     |
|                |   |                |   |                |
 ----------------     ----------------     ----------------

 ----------------                           ----------------
|                |                         |     OBL        |
|                |     ----------------    |                |
|     COM        |--|    CI  X  EI    |---|     COM        |
|                |     ----------------    |     DOM        |
|                |                         |                |
 ----------------                           ----------------

 ----------------     ----------------     ----------------
|                |   |                |   |                |
|     COM        |--|    CA  X  EI    |---|     AVO        |
|                |   |                |   |                |
 ----------------     ----------------     ----------------
```
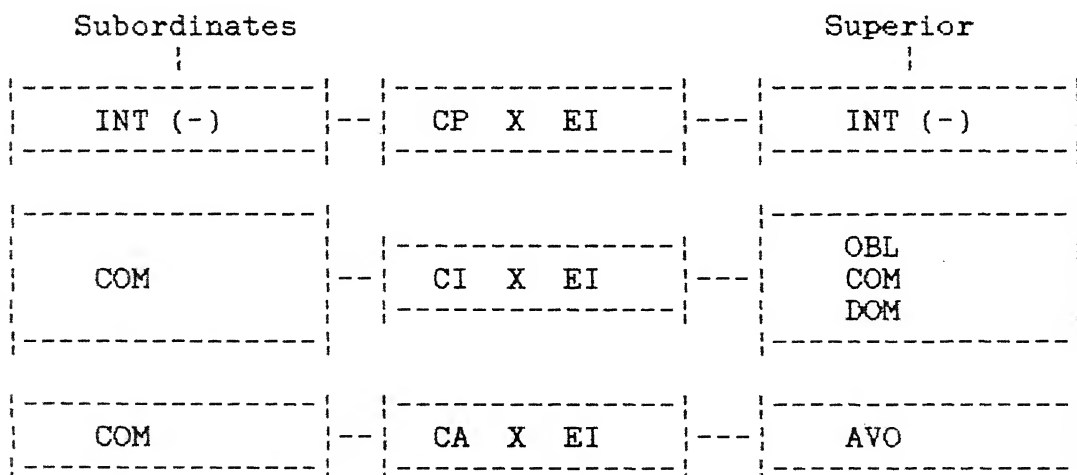
Figure 4.12.    Summary of relationships between climate vs extent of influence and conflict handling styles.

Note.            Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. EI = Extent of Influence: For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5.

However, the use of compromising and obliging styles in this context are rather difficult to explain.

## Climate by Causes of Conflict Interactions

Conflict handling styles were significantly affected by the interactions between the perceived climate of the organization and the causes of conflict. A summary of these relationships is given in Figure 4.13.

As is evident, climate-causes of conflict interactions predicted the use of all but the dominating style with both subordinates and superior. In a low power oriented climate, respondents used the obliging style more often when scarcity of resources was a frequent cause of conflict with subordinates. Since the climate does not direct the activities of its members, respondents attempt to secure resources which are scarce by obliging and winning favors from the subordinates. In the same climate, respondents used integrating and compromising styles with the superior when the scarcity of resources was perceived to be a less frequent cause of conflict. It is likely that respondents choose to use rational ways like integrating with the superior in a conducive climate when resources are sufficient. Compromising may be used as a backup style when integrating is not possible (Blake & Mouton, 1964).

High power oriented climate interacted with frequent role ambiguity and power incongruence in predicting the use of avoiding style with subordinates, and compromising style with the superior. In a climate that encourages the exercise of power and

control, the possibility of using rational methods is reduced by the respondents' lack of clarity in understanding what prescriptions exist for a given role and, hence, the use of avoiding style by subordinates. In the same climate, compromising appeared to be the only feasible way of resolving conflicts when placed in an unequal power position with the superior.

Independence oriented climate interacted with causes of conflict in determining the use of compromising, avoiding, and integrating styles with subordinates. When clashes of values, beliefs, and interests with subordinates as a cause of conflict was less frequent, respondents used the compromising style for resolving conflict in a low independence oriented climate. By compromising respondents prevent the clashes from aggravating, since the organization was less likely to participate in the process of overcoming opposition and resolving conflicts. In the same vein, respondents used the avoiding style when role expectations was a frequent cause of conflict with subordinates. Because the climate was unlikely to participate in the process of conflict resolution, respondents had no option but to withdraw in order to avoid the conflicting actions of their behavior.

On the other hand, respondents used the integrating style in a high independence oriented climate when role ambiguity as a cause of conflict with subordinates was less frequent. This finding implies that since the possibility of getting support from an autonomous climate is less, the respondents integrated

with subordinates because of existing ambiguities regarding their roles.

```
        Subordinates                                      Superior
             ¦                                               ¦
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !      *        !-----!   CP  X  C2   !---! !     INT       !
  !               !     !---------------!   ! !     COM       !
  !               !                         ! !               !
  !---------------!                         !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !     AVO       !-----!   CP  X  C5   !---! !      *        !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !    OBL (-)    !-----!   CP  X  C3   !---! !     COM       !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !     COM       !-----!   CI  X  C4   !---! !      *        !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !    AVO (-)    !-----!   CI  X  C4   !---! !      *        !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !      *        !-----!   CA  X  C1   !---! !    INT (-)    !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !      *        !-----!   CA  X  C5   !---! !    INT (-)    !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!

  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
  !               !     !               !     !               !
  !     COM       !-----!   CA  X  C3   !---! !     OBL       !
  !---------------!     !---------------!     !---------------!
```

Figure  4.13.    Summary  of  relationships between    climate  vs causes of conflict and conflict handling styles.

Note.             Asterisks indicate no significant  interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate  negative impact; For abbreviations, see Figure  4.5  and Figure 4.9.

Achievement oriented climate-causes of conflict interactions predicted the use of integrating and obliging styles with the superior and compromising and obliging styles with subordinates. High achievement oriented climate interacted with power incongruence in determining the use of obliging style with both subordinates and superior. Because the respondent and the target are placed in an unequal power position, it is unlikely for them to use any extreme mode of conflict resolution in a climate that emphasizes upon producing results. Therefore, respondents do favors for those who have the resources required for task accomplishment. However, respondents used the compromising style when power incongruence with subordinates as a cause of conflict was less frequent and climate was low achievement oriented. Because of low power gap, respondents are able to interact (compromise) with subordinates in order to attain their goals in a climate that is unsupportive toward their achievement.

The integrating style was used more frequently with superior in a high achievement oriented climate when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests and role ambiguity were less frequent causes of conflict. In a climate that pressurizes its members to improve work performance and produce results, respondents integrate in order to reduce clashes and ambiguities which would hinder the process of goal attainment.

## Bases of Power by Degree of Conflict Interactions

The targets' perceived bases of power and the degree to which conflict occurred between the parties interacted

significantly in predicting the use of conflict handling styles. Figure 4.14 shows a summary of these relationships.

Low organizational and personal power interacted with high degree of conflict in determining the use of compromising and obliging styles with subordinates. These interactions were not apparent in the superior context. On the other hand, high information power interacted with high degree of conflict in predicting the use of integrating and dominating styles with superior. By integrating their ideas and efforts with a superior having valuable information regarding a specefic issue, respondents probably increase the chances of resolving conflicts. However, when integrating fails, respondents may resort to stronger modes like dominating in order to derive information from the target.

Finally, when superior had low information power, respondents used the avoiding style in a high conflict situation. This finding implies that, inspite of the superior possessing low information power, his position power compels subordinates to avoid the situation in order to reduce conflict.

```
   Subordínates                                    Superior
        ¦                                             ¦
 :--------------:     :--------------:     :--------------:
 :    COM (-)   :----:    OR  X  DC  :----:       *      :
 :    OBL (-)   :     :--------------:     :              :
 :--------------:                          :--------------:


 :--------------:     :--------------:     :--------------:
 :    OBL (-)   :----:    PE  X  DC  :----:       *      :
 :--------------:     :--------------:     :--------------:
```

```
 ------------------        ------------------        ------------------
|                  |      |                  |      |   INT  (-)       |
|        *         |------|    IN  X  DC     |------|   AVO            |
|        .         |      |                  |      |   DOM            |
|                  |      |                  |      |                  |
 ------------------        ------------------        ------------------
```
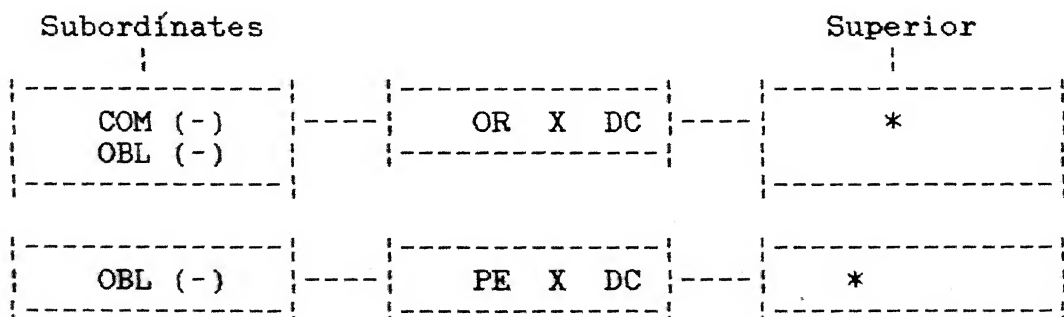
Figure  4.14.       Summary of relationships between bases of power
                    vs degree of conflict and conflict handling
                    styles.

Note.               Asterisks indicate no significant interactions;
                    Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative
                    impact.   Abbreviation: DC = Degree of Conflict.
                    For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5 and
                    Figure 4.6.

## Bases of Power by Extent of Influence Interactions

The respondents' extent of influence over the target and the targets' perceived bases of power interacted significantly in determining the use of conflict handling styles with superior.  A summary of these relationships is given in Figure 4.15.

All the four bases of power interacted with the extent of influence in predicting the use of integrating, compromising, and dominating styles with the superior.  However, these interactions failed to predict the use of any conflict handling styles in the subordinate context.  The integrating style was used more often when the respondents' influence was low and the superior had access to vital information. Due to low influence, it was unlikely that respondents would use strong modes for seeking information from their superior.  Similarly, respondents integrated when the target had personal power and their own influence was high.  The superior's position power in the organization, respondents' feelings of shared identity with the

superior, and the perception of his expertise results in the use of the integrating mode.

```
          Subordinates                                        Superior
                |                                                 |
  .----------------------.    .----------------.    .----------------.
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  |          *           |----|   IN  X  EI    |----|    INT (-)     |
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  '----------------------'    '----------------'    '----------------'

  .----------------------.    .----------------.    .----------------.
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  |          *           |----|   PE  X  EI    |----|    INT         |
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  '----------------------'    '----------------'    '----------------'

  .----------------------.    .----------------.    .----------------.
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  |          *           |----|   OR  X  EI    |----|    COM (-)     |
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  '----------------------'    '----------------'    '----------------'

  .----------------------.    .----------------.    .----------------.
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  |          *           |----|   CO  X  EI    |----|    DOM         |
  |                      |    |                |    |                |
  '----------------------'    '----------------'    '----------------'
```

Figure 4.15. Summary of relationships between bases of power vs extent of influence and conflict handling styles.

Note. Asterisks indicate no significicnat interactions; Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative impact. Abbreviation: EI = Extent of Influence. For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6.

However, when superior did not possess the authority to grant the subordinates any rewards or punishment, respondents used the compromising style inspite of having high influence over the superior. This finding seems to be rather difficult to interpret.

Finally, respondents used the dominating style when the superior had connection power and the respondents' extent of influence was high. Because of their influence, respondents used coercion in forcing those who had connections with important and

influential persons to accede to their demands.

## Bases of Power by Causes of Conflict Interactions

The targets' perceived bases of power and the causes of conflict significantly predicted the use of conflict handling styles with both subordinates and superior. A summary of these relationships is shown in Figure 4.16.

Causes of conflict-bases of power interactions predicted the use of integrating, avoiding, and dominating styles with subordinates.

When the subordinates had high information power, respondents used integrating and avoiding styles with them when the scarcity of resources and power incongruence were frequent causes of conflict. By integrating their ideas and efforts with subordinates, respondents probably aimed at reducing and sharing the resources that are scarce and deriving information to which the subordinates have access. However, when they were placed in an unequal power position with subordinates possessing vital information, they attempted to compromise in order to neutralize the power balance and use the information for resolving conflicts. In the same context, respondents used the avoiding style when subordinates had low information power. Since subordinates are not generally in a position to enrich respondents with information, the respondents (as superior) used the avoiding style in order to maintain a position of unequal power distribution with their subordinates.

Subordinates                                      Superior

```
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|   INT (-)     |----| IN   X   C2   |----|   OBL (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|   AVO (-)     |----| IN   X   C3   |----|      *        |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| IN   X   C4   |----| INT  OBL (- ) |
|               |      ---------------    | AVO (-)       |
 ---------------                           ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| CO   X   C2   |----|     AVO       |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|     DOM       |----| O    X   C1   |----|   INT (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| OR   X   C4   |----|   OBL (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| OR   X   C3   |----|     INT       |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| OR   X   C5   |----|   INT (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| PE   X   C1   |----|   OBL (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| PE   X   C4   |----|   AVO (-)     |
 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------

 ---------------      ---------------      ---------------
|      *        |----| PE   X   C5   |----|   AVO (-)     |
|               |      ---------------    |   OBL (-)     |
 ---------------                           ---------------
```
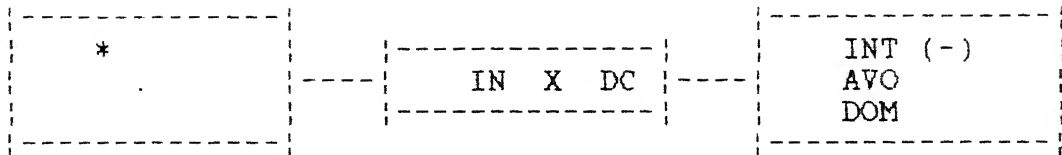
Figure 4.16.    Summary of relationships between bases of power vs causes of conflict on conflict handling styles.

<u>Note</u>.          Asterisks indicate no significant interactions;
                 Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative
                 impact.  For abbreviations, see Figure 4.6  and
                 Figure 4.9.

When  scarcity  of  resources was not a  frequent  cause  of
conflict,  respondents used the obliging style when the  superior
had information power.  Since securing the resources was not  the
prime  concern,  respondents as subordinates  used  the  obliging
style  with  the  superior in order to  make  him  delegate  the
information  to  them.   In the case of role  expectations  as  a
frequent cause of conflict, respondents used the dominating style
when  superior possessed information power.  Though this  finding
seems  to  be  difficult to interpret, it may  be  reasoned  that
respondents perceive their superior to have information that  may
reduce the incongruence in their role behaviors and, hence,  they
attempt to compel the superior to give into their demands.

In the same context, respondents used avoiding and  obliging
styles  when the superior was perceived to have  low  information
power.  When the respondents face frequent incongruence in actual
and  desired  role behaviors, they resort to  the  avoiding  mode
since  the  superior  is  not  in  a  position  to  furnish  the
subordinates  with  information  that would  specify  their  role
expectations.   However,  when both  information power  and  role
expectations  as  a  cause of conflict  were  low,  respondents
integrated. with  the  superior  in  view  of  the  hierarchical
differences in their respective positions.

High connection power interacted with the frequent  scarcity

of resources as a cause of conflict in determining the use of avoiding · style with superior. In view of the superior's contacts, the possibility of the subordinates securing resources that are scarce is less, they avoid the situation altogether.

The integrating style with subordinates and the dominating style with superior were significantly predicted by the interaction of organizational power with clashes of values, beliefe, and interests. Becauses clashes of values, beliefs, and interest as a cause of conflict was frequent, the possibility of subordinates using organizational power was high; hence, the respondents (as superior) used coercion in order to counterpower the subordinates. On the other hand, respondents integrated with the superior, since clashes of values were low and superior was in a position to punish or to provide benefits to them.

Similarly, integrating style was used when role ambiguity was a less frequent cause of conflict with superior. When respondents are aware of their role demands and expectations and the functioning of the organization, they are in a better position to understand the superior's legitimate position and, hence, they use those methods which will benefit them and their superior.

Finally, low personal power interacted with frequent role expectations and role ambiguity as a cause of conflict in predicting the use of avoiding and obliging styles with the superior. Because the respondents face frequent incongruence in their actual and desired role behaviors and the superior lacks

the expertise required for solving the problem, respondents choose to use an avoiding mode since feelings of identification with the superior is also low. It is possible that obliging is used as a backup style considering the status of the target person.

In the case of superior having high personal power, respondents used the obliging style when clashes of values, beliefs, and interests was a less frequent cause of conflict. Because clashes with superior are low, respondents used the obliging style because of the personal liking for the superior and the perception that they (superiors) have the expertise in a relevant area.

## Degree of Conflict by Causes of Conflict Interactions

The compromising and dominating styles were significantly predicted by causes of conflict-degree of conflict interactions in the subordinate context. A summary of these interactions is shown in Figure 4.17.

As is evident, these interactions did not predict the use of any handling styles with the superior. It is possible that whatever the causes of conflict may be, respondents altogether avoid the situations in which conflict with superior may erupt.

However, when scarcity of resources was a frequent cause of conflict, respondents used compromising and dominating styles when the degree of conflict with subordinates was high. This finding implies that respondents try both assertive and nonassertive modes of conflict resolution in a high conflict

situation. Compromising provides the respondents with the
opportunity to resolve conflict by giving in something. In

```
          Subordinates                                    Superior
               ¦                                              ¦
  ¦---------------------¦   ¦-------------------¦   ¦-------------------¦
  ¦        COM          ¦---¦   DC  X  C2       ¦---¦        *          ¦
  ¦        DOM          ¦   ¦-------------------¦   ¦                   ¦
  ¦---------------------¦                           ¦-------------------¦
```

Figure 4.17.    Summary of relationships between degree of conflict
                vs causes of conflict and conflict handling
                styles.

Note.           Asterisks indicate no significant interactions.
                Abbreviation: DC = Degree of Conflict.  For other
                abbreviations, see Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.9.

return they accomplish something. When both parties have some
amount of resources, the chances of reducing conflict are
enhanced. On the other hand, respondents may resort to the
dominating mode since their status as superior facilitates the
exercise of power to reduce conflict.

**Extent of Influence by Causes of Conflict Interactions**

The respondents' extent of influence over the target
person(s) and the causes of conflict significantly predicted the
use of conflict handling styles. A summary of these
interactions is depicted in Figure 4.18.

Extent of influence interacted with causes of conflict in
predicting the use of compromising style in the superior context.
In the subordinate context, the interactions predicted all
handling styles but the obliging style. Low extent of influence
interacted with the high frequency of clashes of values, beliefs,

and interests in predicting the use of integrating style with

```
    Subordinates                                      Superior
         |                                               |
 .---------------.       .---------------.       .---------------.
 |     INT       |----   |  EI  X  C1    |----   |      *        |
 |     DOM       |       .---------------.       |               |
 .---------------.                               .---------------.

 .---------------.       .---------------.       .---------------.
 |   AVO (-)     |----   |  EI  X  C4    |----   |   COM (-)     |
 .---------------.       .---------------.       .---------------.

 .---------------.       .---------------.       .---------------.
 |   AVO (-)     |----   |  EI  X  C5    |----   |   COM (-)     |
 |   COM (-)     |       |               |       |               |
 .---------------.       .---------------.       .---------------.
```

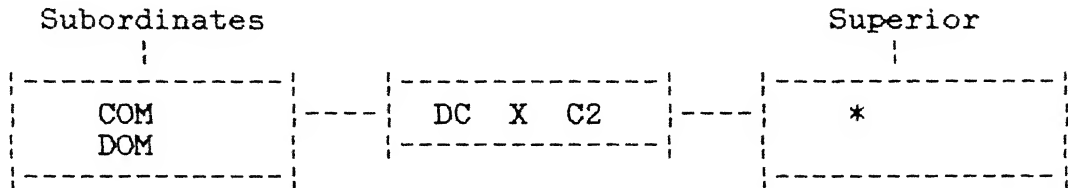<u>Figure</u>  <u>4.18</u>.      Summary of relationships between extent of
                    influence <u>vs</u> causes of conflict and conflict
                    handling styles.

<u>Note</u>.              Asterisks indicate no significant interactions;
                    Negative signs in parentheses indicate negative
                    impact, Abbreviation: EI = Extent of Influence.
                    For other abbreviations, see Figure 4.5 and
                    Figure 4.8.

subordinates.   It is likely that respondents integrated because

clashes with subordinates were frequent and their own capacity to

influence decisions was low.  However, when their capacity to

influence was high, they used the dominating style in the same

situation.  The status of the respondents enable them to use such

assertive modes for resolving conflicts.

Role expectations interacted with the extent of influence in

determining the use of avoiding style with subordinates, and

compromising style with the superior.  Since the respondents face

frequent incongruence in what they are doing and what they are

expected to do, they use the avoiding mode as their power to

influence subordinates is low. In the same situation, respondents used the compromising style with the superior probably because their position as subordinates does not allow them to escape the situation. The finding that respondents used the avoiding and compromising styles with the superior when role ambiguity was not a frequent cause of conflict and they had greater influence over subordinates could not be explained.

However, when role ambiguity was frequent as a cause of conflict with the superior, respondents used the compromising style when their influence was low. Since subordinates are not in a position to influence decisions they compromise with an aim to clearing up the existing ambiguities.

## Demographic and Organizational Characteristics

In the following section, an attempt has been made to understand how demographic and organizational characteristics shape the conflict handling behavior of managers with respect to the status of the target person.

### Domographic Characteristics

As stated earlier (Chapter 2), factor analysis of demographic characteristics of the respondents constrained to two interpretable factors namely, seniority and success. In the present study, seniority and success were found to be a significant predictor for the use of conflict handling styles. A summary of these relationships is shown in Figure 4.19.

Seniority emerged as a significant predictor for the use of integrating and compromising styles with both subordinates and

superior.    Success   negatively influenced the   use   of   obliging
style with both targets--subordinates and superior--but   avoiding

```
    Subordinates                                    Superior
         |                                             |
 ,---------------, ,---------------, ,---------------,
 | INT           |----| Seniority |----| INT          |
 | COM           |    |           |    | COM          |
 '---------------' '---------------' '---------------'

 ,---------------, ,---------------, ,---------------,
 | OBL (-)       |----| Success   |----| AVO (-)      |
 |               |    |           |    | OBL (-)      |
 '---------------' '---------------' '---------------'
```
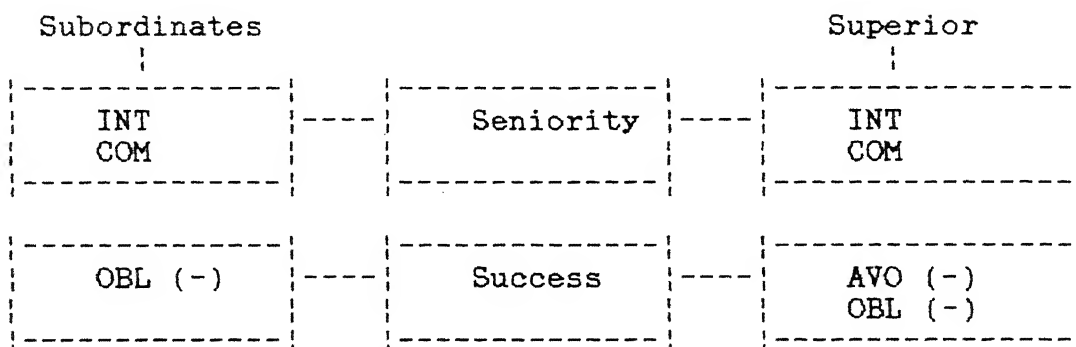
Figure  4.19.        Summary  of  relationships  between  demographic
                     characteristics  and conflict  handling  styles.

Note.                Negative  signs in parentheses indicate  negative
                     impact.  For abbreviations, see Figure 4.1.

style   only   with   the  superior.   These   findings   suggest   that
respondents vary their styles of handling conflict as a   function
of their background characteristics.  Respondents who were older,
had  a longer tenure in their organization and position, and  had
received  more promotions (i.e., seniority) showed a greater  use
of integrating and compromising styles in both contexts.   It   may
be   reasoned that respondents used the integrating style   because
their   experience   in the organization   and   respective   position
enable  them to use a style which requires confrontation with the
target   and   the   problem.  It is also  likely   that  respondents
integrate their   ideas  and efforts with  others   in   order   to
maintain  their position in the  organization.  Compromising  may
have been used as a follow up technique.

However, respondents drawing higher salary and who perceived themselves to have achieved a great deal of success in their professional career (i.e., success) were less likely to use the obliging style with both the targets but avoiding style with the superior only. The obliging style is used in order to derive favors from persons having the requisites for goal attainment. However, when the respondents perceive themselves to be successful, the need to seek favors by obliging is minimized. In the same context, respondents were less likely to avoid their superior since they were in a position to resolve conflicts by using other methods.

## Level and Ownership

Under this head is examined the role of ownership and hierarchical levels on the use of conflict handling styles. The main and interactive effects of ownership and level were examined by employing a 2 x 2 ANOVA of unequal $n$'s. Figure 4.20 shows a summary of relationships between ownership and handling styles.

Respondents in the public sector organizations showed a more frequent use of integrating style for handling conflict with both the subordinates and the superior. On the other hand, respondents reported more frequent use of dominating style for handling differences with subordinates in private sector organizations.

The difference in the use of conflict handling styles between private and public sector organizations can be explained on the basis of the inbuilt differences between the two. The

private sector is mainly a one-man business and productivity is the top priority of managers. It is found to be predominantly task-oriented and drives its members to maximize output. In contrast to this, the public sector has a diffused ownership pattern which is desirable from the point of view of wider participation in business and at the same time reduction in the concentration of wealth in society.

```
      Subordinates                                    Superior
           |                                             |
 :---------------:      :---------------:      :---------------:
 :      INT      :----: Public Sector :----:      INT      :
 :---------------:      :---------------:      :---------------:

 :---------------:      :---------------:      :---------------:
 :      DOM      :----:Private Sector:----:       *       :
 :---------------:      :---------------:      :---------------:
```
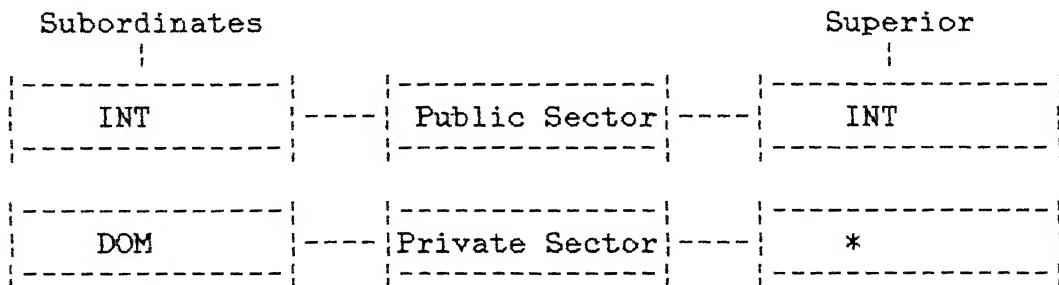
Figure 4.20.    Summary of relationships between ownership and conflict handling styles.

Note.            Asterisks indicate absence of any significant relationship. For abbreviations, see Figure 4.1.

In view of these differences, it may be reasoned that respondents in the private sectors used the dominating style with subordinates because ownership is not diffused and power lies in the hands of fewer persons. It, therefore, becomes easier for managers to use their influence and power with subordinates. Since increasing productivity is the prime concern, managers in the private sector organizations drive their members hard to meet the desired outcome. However, because power lies in the hands of the top management, it is unlikely that respondents would use the dominating style with the superior.

On the contrary, in public sector organizations, respondents are integrating because ownership is diffused and power is vested in the people. In view of this, respondents are able to confront both the subordinates and the superior for resolving conflicts.

Although not predicted, a significant interaction between ownership and level was found. Compared to those at lower levels, managers at the middle levels reported more frequent use of dominating style in private sector organizations. It may be reasoned that because private sector attaches top priority to task attainment, managers at middle levels generally use assertive modes with subordinates in order to pressurize them to deliver the goods.

## Conclusions

In a nutshell, the findings of this study suggest that conflict handling styles are meaningfully related to the key variables. However, the direct effects have been found to be much stronger than the interaction effects in determining the use of handling styles. Though some of the interactions were strong and logically sound, the absence of many interaction effects needs additional explanations.

The complexity of human behavior cannot be understood solely in terms of the person or the situation but in terms of the interaction between the two. Interactionists believe in the primacy of interaction between persons and settings as the cause of behavior. Although the interactionist position in this problem area is lacking, it is believed to most accurately

represent the emergent nature of the real world of work settings (Schneider, 1983). Laboratory experiments which fail to capture person-situation reciprocity are ineffective as sources of information about real-time behavior, and multiple regression procedures for testing the significance of algebraic interaction terms are but one way to conceptualize the meaning of interaction. The reality is that most studies fail to find support for the significance of the interaction term. The failure to obtain significant interactions is commonly attributed to the fact that extremes of persons and situations rarely exist together. The real problem lies in the data analysis technique. Considering the controversy over the data analysis technique and exploratory nature of the study, it may be concluded that interactions may exist but researchers are unable to ascertain. Future research in this direction can strengthen the interactional perspective.

The interactionists talk of the interaction between individual factors (personal) and the situational factors. In other words they hypothesize an interaction between the internal and external factors. Lack of interactions results in most cases could probably be because of working out an interaction between either internal factors (e.g., personal attributes X extent of influence) or the external factors (e.g., degree of conflict X causes of conflict). Besides, there are many variables which are difficult to evaluate along the internal-external dimension and they are somewhat diffused (e.g., bases of power). This

strengthens the position of traditional interactionists.

Table 4.2

A Summary of Interactions

| Variables | Possible Interactions | No. of Significant Interactions | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| PA X CL | | | |
| Subordinates | 45 | 8 | 17.78 |
| Superior | 45 | 6 | 13.33 |
| PA X BP | | | |
| Subordinates | 60 | 13 | 21.67 |
| Superior | 60 | 3 | 5.00 |
| PA X DC | | | |
| Subordinates | 15 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Superior | 15 | 3 | 20.00 |
| PA X EI | | | |
| Subordinates | 15 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Superior | 15 | 1 | 6.67 |
| PA X CC | | | |
| Subordinates | 75 | 2 | 2.67 |
| Superior | 75 | 13 | 17.33 |
| CL X BP | | | |
| Subordinates | 60 | 2 | 3.33 |
| Superior | 60 | 8 | 13.33 |
| CL X DC | | | |
| Subordinates | 15 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Superior | 15 | 2 | 13.33 |
| CL X EI | | | |
| Subordinates | 15 | 3 | 20.00 |
| Superior | 15 | 5 | 33.33 |

CL X CC

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 75 | 7 | 9.33 |
| Superior | 75 | 6 | 8.00 |

BP X DC

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 20 | 3 | 15.00 |
| Superior | 20 | 3 | 15.00 |

BP X EI

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 20 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Superior | 20 | 4 | 20.00 |

BP X CC

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 100 | 3 | 3.00 |
| Superior | 100 | 12 | 12.00 |

DC X CC

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 25 | 2 | 8.00 |
| Superior | 25 | 0 | 0.00 |

EI X CC

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subordinates | 25 | 5 | 20.00 |
| Superior | 25 | 1 | 4.00 |

---

Note.    For abbreviations, see Table 2.13.

# Chapter 5

## SUMMING UP

The present chapter has been organized into five sections. The first briefly describes the objectives and the strategy of the study. The second summarizes the study findings. The third section highlights the conclusions of this volume for practical implications. The fourth section deals with the potential limitations of this study. The fifth section deals with a note on looking into future.

### The Background

Conflict is an inevitable part of any kind of interaction, the behavioral manifestations of which take various forms. The resolution or management of conflict essentially involves learning behavior patterns appropriate to a particular situation. These behavior patterns cluster to form what are commonly known as conflict handling styles. The present study has presented the concept of conflict handling styles as behavioral reactions to conflict management.

The study has presented data as to how managers adopt various styles for handling conflict with immediate subordinates and superior. In the course of this presentation, eight key elements are considered: personal attributes (needs), perceived organizational climate, bases of power, extent of influence, causes of conflict, the degree of conflict, demographic characteristics, and organizational characteristics. These factors have been examined in relation to conflict handling

styles of the respondents with their immediate subordinates and superior.

The study was conducted in six heterogeneous organizations located in northern India. Some represented public sectors while others were privately managed; some were large organizations while others were small ones. Altogether 225 male executives representing middle and lower levels of management voluntarily participated in the study. All the six organizations taken were manufacturing units.

The study employed a number of measures to assess the key predictors and the criterion measures of conflict handling styles. The psychometric properties of these measures were thoroughly checked before they were subjected to final analysis. Psychometric evidence were gathered with the help of descriptive statistics, correlations, varimax rotated factor analysis, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The final analyses testing the major hypotheses were subjected to stepwise and hierarchical multiple regression analyses.

## Summary

The findings of the present study are summarized below.

(1) Executives use more or less the same styles for handling conflict with their immediate subordinates and superior. Integrating and dominating appeared to be the most and the least preferred styles for handling conflict with both subordinates and superior.

(2) Personal orientations (needs) of the respondents significantly influenced the use of conflict handling styles. The dominating, integrating, and obliging styles were used by power, achievement, and independence oriented respondents. Status of the target person did not make any significant difference in this regard. On the other hand, obliging, dominating, and integrating styles with subordinates and avoiding, dominating, and compromising styles with superior were predicted by these needs.

(3) The perceived climate of the organization made little difference in the use of handling styles as a function of the status of the target person(s). The avoiding and obliging styles were used in a power oriented climate, the integrating and avoiding styles in an independence oriented climate. However, the integrating, avoiding, and dominating styles were used only with superior in achievement and independence oriented climates.

(4) Targets' perceived bases of power significantly influenced the respondents' choice of conflict handling styles with respect to the target person. Obliging and integrating styles were related to connection and personal power in both the contexts. These power bases (connection and personal) predicted the avoiding style with superior. Whereas information power predicted the integrating and dominating styles with subordinates it failed to predict any handling style with the superior. Similarly, organizational power determined the use of obliging style only with the superior.

(5) Respondents used the integrating, avoiding, and obliging styles with subordinates when the causes of conflict were clashes of values, beliefs, and interests, and power incongruence. The obliging, dominating, and avoiding styles were used with superior when the causes of conflict were power incongruence and role ambiguity.

(6) Personal attributes interacted with climate in predicting conflict handling styles with both subordinates and superior. A match was found between independence orientation of the respondents and independence oriented climate. This pair significantly predicted the use of obliging style in both contexts. A match in terms of achievement (person-climate) negatively predicted the use of integrating, compromising, and dominating styles in the superior context. On the other hand, match in terms of power orientation predicted negatively the use of obliging and positively the use of dominating styles in the subordinate context. No other match was found between personal attributes and climate, though many of the interaction results were significant.

(7) Personal attributes interacted with targets' bases of power in predicting the use of all the five styles with subordinates. However, these interactions predicted the use of obliging and dominating styles with superior.

(8) Interactions between attributes and degree of conflict predicted the use of integrating and avoiding styles with subordinates and integrating, avoiding, and compromising styles

with superior. Needs for power and independence interacted with the extent of influence in predicting the use of avoiding style with subordinates and obliging style with the superior. Conflict handling styles were also predicted by personal attributes-causes of conflict interactions.

(10) Climate--bases of power interactions predicted the use of dominating style with subordinates and the use of all but integrating style with the superior.

(11) Interactions between climate and degree of conflict, climate and extent of influence, climate and causes of conflict, bases of power and degree of conflict, bases of power and causes of conflict, causes of conflict and degree of conflict, and causes of conflict and extent of influence also significantly predicted the use of conflict handling styles.

(12) Respondents were more integrating in public sectors and dominating in private sector organizations. Compared to those at lower levels, managers at middle levels of management made more frequent use of the dominating style.

## Implications

Conflict is inevitable in organizations. Whether the effect of conflict is good or bad depends upon the strategies used to deal with it in a particular context. Management practitioners had generally sought to eliminate conflict. Now-a-days the emphasis is shifting from the notion of conflict resolution or elimination to the notion of conflict management.

Taken as a whole, the present study provides insight into the various styles of handling conflict and the situations in which they may be appropriately used. Organizational characteristics make a significant difference in the use of conflict handling styles. In addition to this, personal characteristics are found to be critical to individuals behavior. Individuals take both their personal characteristics and situational factors into account in making assessments of the relative effectiveness of various conflict handling styles. An understanding of personal and situational factors provides a ground for individuals to assess and employ a particular style at a given point of time. This in turn has implications for the success or failure of conflict management and the functioning of the organization as a whole.

The present research also took into consideration the perceived power bases of the target person and related these to different styles of handling conflict. In the process of doing so, it integrated two important research areas in the psychological and organizational literature and highlighted the importance of social power in the field of conflict management.

The study also provides insights into some of the potential causes of conflict and their influence on conflict handling styles. It suggests that the style chosen should be in accordance with the cause of conflict. Therefore, alteration of these causes could have immediate and profound effects on the use of handling styles.

In sum, the present study has provided a framework for understanding conflict in general and conflict handling styles in particular. If it is understood by managers, it may provide the required perspective for the effective management of conflicts in organizations. If managers are to become more effective in using their styles for handling conflict, they must learn to understand some of the critical contingencies.

The data provide evidence to suggest that Indian managers are flexible in using various styles for handling conflict. Appropriate training must be provided for using the most appropriate style in a given organizational climate. However, choosing the most appropriate style can be improved by self-examination and management development programs (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1984). Managers need to be aware of a variety of handling styles and their possible effects rather than relying on the traditional method of managing conflict by eliminating it.

## Limitations

As with any other organizational research, this study is not free from potential limitations. One major limitation is that of self-report measures employed in the study. Although the present findings are not very inconsistent with those of previous studies, more objective measures need to be developed to enhance convergent validity. Another problem of this study is the problem of method variance. The possibility of respondents maintaining consistency in their responses cannot be denied. However, in order to overcome this problem, items were properly

randomized in the two scales which were placed wide apart in the questionnaire.

## Looking into future

The overall results of this survey suggest several directions for further research. One important area for exploration is the consequences of the use of conflict handling styles and the causes of their success and failure. It would be interesting to examine how managers attribute their success or failure to internal or external factors. Future research should also focus on the relationship between conflict handling styles and leadership styles. That is, given a particular leadership style which conflict handling style is most likely to be used. Also, there is a need to develop new models of conflict handling styles having fixed targets and specified assumptions.

To conclude, if management of an organization needs to be effective, more must be known about the determinants of conflict handling styles.

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## APPENDIX A

## WORK BEHAVIOR

The purpose of this research is to understand the interpersonal relationship of people at work. This questionnaire is intended to examine your relationship with your immediate superior, immediate subordinates, and your organization, and to your own self.

Your answers to the questions will be kept in <u>strictest</u> <u>confidence</u>. No one in your organization will see your answers, nor will your organization be identified by the researcher. Be sure to answer every question to the best of your ability. Your frank and 'sincere replies will help us to understnd your organization and suggest some ways which might make it a better place wherein to work.

Thank you for your cooperation,

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## SECTION I - <u>Immediate</u> <u>Subordinates</u>

**1 (CC).** Below are listed some factors which are generally considered to be causes of disagreement between people. Please rate the <u>frequency</u> with which each of them has generally been a cause of disagreement between you and your <u>immediate</u> <u>subordinates</u>, select the number of your choice as indicated below, and write it on the small line to the left of the factor.

```
  Never                ...   1
  Almost never         ...   2
  Seldom               ...   3
  Sometimes            ...   4
  Usually              ...   5
  Almost always        ...   6
  Always               ...   7
```

-- (1)    Clashes of Values, Beliefs, and Interests

-- (2)    Scarcity of Resources (i.e., limited resources)

-- (3)    Power Incongruence (i.e., unequal distribution of power)

-- (4)    Role Expectations (i.e., incongruence between expected and actual role behavior)

-- (5)    Role Ambiguity (i.e., poorly defined responsibilities or duties)

**2 (EI).** Following statements concern your interaction with your <u>immediate</u> <u>subordinates</u>. Please read each of them carefully and judge the <u>extent</u> to which it is true to your relationship with him/her. Please write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of each statement.

```
  Almost no extent           ...   1
  To a very small extent     ...   2
  To a small extent          ...   3
  To some extent             ...   4
  To a considerable extent   ...   5
  To a great extent          ...   6
  To a very great extent     ...   7
```

-- (1) I am usually successful in obtaining recognition for the success of my immediate subordinates.

-- (2) I usually control the behavior of my immediate subordinates.

-- (3) I am usually successful in dealing with my immediate subordinates.

-- (4) I easily get my ideas across to my immediate subordinates.

-- (5) My suggestions are generally accepted by my immediate subordinates.

-- (6) I can influence the decisions of my immediate subordinates.

-- (7) I usually influence my immediate subordinates' opinion when a problem comes up that involves them.


**3 (BP).** Following statements are concerned with why do you work for your immediate subordinates (i.e., why do you respond to or comply with them)? Please read each of them carefully and judge the <u>extent</u> to which it is true to your relationship with them, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of the statement.

```
-----------------------------------------------
|  Almost no extent           ... 1           |
|  To a very small extent     ... 2           |
|  To a small extent          ... 3           |
|  To some extent             ... 4           |
|  To a considerable extent   ... 5           |
|  To a great extent          ... 6           |
|  To a very great extent     ... 7           |
-----------------------------------------------
```

<u>I RESPOND TO MY IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES BECAUSE</u>:

-- (1) They can put pressure on me by withholding their services in terms of strikes, lockouts, etc.

-- (2) They possess or have access to information that is valuable to me.

-- (3) They can give special help and benefits if I cooperate with them.

-- (4) Their position in the organization provides them with the authority to restrict my work activities.

-- (5) They have connections with influential and important persons.

-- (6) They have some special knowledge and competence required for the job.

-- (7) They are likeable people.

**4 (HS).** Below are described various ways of resolving differences with people at work. Please rate (on a 7-point scale given below) the _frequency_ with which you involve in the following behaviors to resolve your differences with your _immediate_ _subordinates_. Describe each statement in terms of what you generally do, _not_ what you would like to do, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of the statement.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Never          ... 1            │
│ Almost never   ... 2            │
│ Seldom         ... 3            │
│ Sometimes      ... 4            │
│ Usually        ... 5            │
│ Almost always  ... 6            │
│ Always         ... 7            │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

-- (01I) I try to work with my immediate subordinates for a proper understanding of a problem.

-- (02A) I generally avoid an argument with my immediate subordinates.

-- (03A) I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my immediate subordinates.

-- (04A) I try to keep my disagreement with my immediate subordinates to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.

-- (05D) I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.

-- (06O) I try to satisfy the expectations of my immediate subordinates.

-- (07I)     I collaborate with my immediate subordinates to come up with decisions acceptable to us.

-- (08I)     I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.

-- (09D)     I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.

-- (10C)     I use "give-and-take" so that a compromise can be made.

-- (11O)     I often go along with the suggestions of my immediate subordinates.

-- (12D)     I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor.

-- (13A)     I avoid an encounter with my immediate subordinates.

-- (14A)     I try to stay away from disagreement with my immediate subordinates.

-- (15C)     I negotiate with my immediate subordinates so that a compromise can be reached.

-- (16C)     I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.

-- (17C)     I try to play down our differences to reach a compromise.

-- (18D)     I argue my case with my immediate subordinates to show the merits of my position.

-- (19O)     I usually allow concessions to my immediate subordinates.

-- (20O)     I sometimes help my immediate subordinates to make a decision in their favor.

-- (21I)     I exchange accurate information with my immediate subordinates to solve a problem together.

-- (22C)     I win some and I lose some.

-- (23O)     I give into the wishes of my immediate subordinates.

-- (24O)     I usually accommodate the wishes of my immediate subordinates.

-- (25D)     I use my authority to make a decision in my favor.

-- (26D)    I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.

-- (27C)    I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.

-- (28D)    I usually hold on to my solution to a problem.

-- (29A)    I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with my immediate subordinates.

-- (30I)    I try to work with my immediate subordinates to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.

-- (31C)    I give some to get some.

-- (32I)    I try to integrate my ideas with those of my immediate subordinates to come up with a decision jointly.

-- (33A)    I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and try to keep my conflict with my immediate subordinates to myself.

-- (34O)    I generally try to satisfy the needs of my immediate subordinates.

-- (35I)    I try to investigate into an issue with my immediate subordinates to find a solution acceptable to us.

-------------------------

-- (36)     How _often_ do you have disagreement in work-related activities with your _immediate subordinates_?

## SECTION II - **PAIR**

Below are listed 20 statements that describe various things people do or try to do on their jobs. Please rate on a 7-point scale given below, how _frequently_ each of the statements _fits_ your action, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of each statement. Remember: There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer all questions frankly.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Never | ... | 1 |
| Almost never | ... | 2 |
| Seldom | ... | 3 |
| Sometimes | ... | 4 |
| Usually | ... | 5 |
| Allmost always | ... | 6 |
| Always | ... | 7 |

-- (01I)    I consider myself a "team player" at work.

-- (02I)    I go my own way at work, regardless of the opinion of others.

-- (03P)    I strive to be "in command" when I am working in a group.

-- (04R)    I express my disagreements with others openly.

-- (05I)    In my work assignments, I try to be my own boss.

-- (06P)    I seek an active role in the leadership of a group.

-- (07I)    I disregard rules and regulations that hamper my personal freedom.

-- (08I)    I try my best to work alone on a job.

-- (09R)    I find myself talking to those around me about non-business related matters.

-- (10A)    I try very hard to improve on my past performance at work.

-- (11A)    I try to avoid any added responsibilities on my job.

-- (12R)    I prefer to do my own work and let others do theirs.

-- (13R)    I pay a good deal of attention to the feelings of others at work.

-- (14A)    I do my best work when job assignments are fairly difficult.

-- (15P)    I avoid trying to influence those around me to see things my way.

-- (16A)    I try to perform better than my co-workers.

-- (17P)    I strive to gain more control over the events around me at work.

-- (18A)    I take moderate risks and stick my neck out to get ahead at work.

-- (19P)    I find myself organizing and directing the activities of others.

-- (20R)    When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself.

## SECTION III - CL

Following set of statements is concerned with your perceptions and observations about the organization in which you are presently working. Please read each of them carefully and judge the _extent_ to which you consider it to be true to your organization, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of the statement.

```
-------------------------------------
  Almost no extent          ...  1
  To a very small extent    ...  2
  To a small extent         ...  3
  To some extent            ...  4
  To a considerable extent  ...  5
  To a great extent         ...  6
  To a very great extent    ...  7
-------------------------------------
```

-- (01R)  This organization encourages its employees to discuss non-business related, personal problems.

-- (02A)  In this organization, there is a feeling of pressure to continually improve individual and group performance.

-- (03I)  In this organization, control is assigned so that I have authority within my work area.

-- (04P)  This organization strives to be "in command" while interacting with other organizations.

-- (05R)  This organization prefers group to individual projects and provides opportunities for its employees to interact among themselves.

-- (06R)  This organization pays a good deal of attention to the feelings of its employees.

-- (07A)  This organization stimulates and approves of innovation and experimentation.

-- (08A)  In this organization, we set fairly high standards for performance.

-- (09P)  This organization prefers to be its own boss, even where it needs assistance, or where joint effort is required.

-- (10I)  In this organization, it is up to us to decide how our job should best be done.

-- (11I)  This organization wants us to be "team players" rather than "independent workers."

-- (12P)  Status symbols are especially important for this organization and it uses them to gain influence over others.

-- (13R)  In this organization, the interpersonal communications among executives and managers are free and open.

-- (14A)  This organization discourages taking of increased responsibilities by its members.

-- (15A)  In this organization, we are free to set our own performance goals.

-- (16I)  In this organization, there are opportunities for independent thoughts and actions on our jobs.

-- (17P)  This organization directs and organizes the activities of its members.

-- (18I)  In this organization, we have a great deal of freedom to decide how we do our job.

-- (19P)  There is a high degree of interpersonal trust among managers and executives in this organization.

-- (20P)  This organization provides a lot of power and control to upper level management.


## SECTION IV -- Immediate Superior

1 (CC).  Below are listed some factor which are generally considered to be causes of disagreement between people. Please rate the frequency with which each of them has generally been a cause of disagreement between you and your immediate superior, select the number of your choice as indicated below, and write it on the small line to the left of the factor.

```
!-----------------------------!
!  Never            ...  1   !
!  Almost never     ...  2   !
!  Seldom           ...  3   !
!  Sometimes        ...  4   !
!  Usually          ...  5   !
!  Almost always    ...  6   !
!  Always           ...  7   !
!-----------------------------!
```

-- (1) Scarcity of Resources (i.e., limited resources)

-- (2) Power Incongruence (i.e., unequal distribution of power

-- (3) Clashes of values, Beliefs, and Interests

-- (4) Role Ambiguity (i.e., poorly defined responsibilities or duties)

-- (5) Role Expectations (i.e., incongruence between expected and actual role behavior)

**2 (EI).** Following statements concern your interaction with your <u>immediate</u> <u>superior</u>. Please read each of them carefully and judge the <u>extent</u> to which it is true to your relationship with him/her. Please write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of each statement.

```
|-----------------------------------------|
|  Almost no extent           ...  1      |
|  To a very small extent     ...  2      |
|  To a small extent          ...  3      |
|  To some extent             ...  4      |
|  To a considerable extent   ...  5      |
|  To a great extent          ...  6      |
|  To a very great extent     ...  7      |
|-----------------------------------------|
```

-- (1) I easily get my ideas across to my immediate superior .

-- (2) I am usually successful in dealing with my immediate superior

-- (3) I usually influence the decisions of my immediate superior

-- (4) I am usually successful in obtaining recognition for the success of my immediate superior

-- (5) My suggestions are generally accepted by my immediate superior

-- (6) I usually control the behavior of my immediate superior

-- (7) I usually influence my immediate superior's. opinion when a problem comes up that involves him/her

**3 (BP).** Following statements are concerned with why do you work for your <u>immediate</u> <u>superior</u> (i.e., why do you respond to or comply with him/her). Please read each of them carefully and judge the <u>extent</u> to which it is true to your relationship with

him/her, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of the statement.

```
!------------------------------------!
!  Almost no extent          ...  1  !
!  To a very small extent    ...  2  !
!  To a small extent         ...  3  !
!  To some extent            ...  4  !
!  To a considerable extent  ...  5  !
!  To a great extent         ...  6  !
!  To a very great extent    ...  7  !
!------------------------------------!
```

I RESPOND TO MY IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR BECAUSE:

-- (1)  He/she has some special knowledge and competence.

-- (2)  I like him/her personally and like to do things as he/she thinks they ought to be done.

-- (3)  He/she can give special help and benefits to those who cooperate with him/her.

-- (4)  He/she can penalize or make things difficult for those who do not cooperate with him/her.

-- (5)  He/she has the right, considering his/her position, to expect subordinates to do what he/she wants.

-- (6)  I learn through his/her skills, experience, and competence.

-- (7)  He/she has connections with influential and important people.

**4  (HS).**  Below are described various ways of resolving differences with people at work.  Please rate (on a 7-point scale given below) the <u>frequency</u> with which you involve in the following behavior to resolve your differences with your <u>immediate superior</u>.  Describe each statement in terms of what you generally do, <u>not</u> what you would like to do, and write the number of your choice on the small line to the left of each statement.

```
!--------------------------------!
!  Never           ....  1       !
!  Almost never    ....  2       !
!  Seldom          ....  3       !
!  Sometimes       ....  4       !
!  Usually         ....  5       !
!  Almost always   ....  6       !
!  Always          ....  7       !
!--------------------------------!
```

-- (01I) I try to investigate into an issue with my immediate superior to find a solution acceptable to us.

-- (02O) I generally try to satisfy the needs of my immediate superior.

-- (03A) I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and try to keep my conflict with my immediate superior to myself.

-- (04I) I try to integrate my ideas with those of my immediate superior to come up with a decision jointly.

-- (05C) I give some to get some.

-- (06I) I try to work with my immediate superior to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.

-- (07A) I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with my immediate superior.

-- (08D) I usually hold on to my solution to a problem.

-- (09C) I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.

-- (10D) I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.

-- (11D) I use my authority to make a decision in my favor.

-- (12O) I usually accommodate the wishes of my immediate superior.

-- (13O) I give in to the wishes of my immediate superior.

-- (14C) I win some and I lose some.

-- (15I) I exchange accurate information with my immediate superior to solve a problem together.

-- (16O) I sometimes help my immediate superior to make a decision in his/her favor.

-- (17O) I usually allow concessions to my immediate superior.

-- (18D) I argue my case with my immediate superior to show the merits of my position.

-- (19C) I try to play down our differences to reach a compromise.

-- (20C) I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.

(02)    Education (Degree, Diploma, etc.) --------------------

(03)    Your job title or designation -------------------------

(04)    Designation of your immediate superior ----------------

(05)    For how many years have you been with your present
        organization? ---------------------------------------

(06)    For how many years have you been working in your
        present position? -----------------------------------

(07)    How many promotions have you received in your
        professional career?---------------------------------

(08)    How many persons directly report to you?  (No. of your
        immediate subordinates) -----------------------------

(09)    All in all, how <u>much</u> success have you achieved in
        your career?  (Check one of the following)

        -- Very much    -- A good deal    -- Quite a bit

        -- Somewhat     -- A little       -- Very little

        -- Not at all

(10)    What is your earned montly income?  (including salary,
        allowances, etc.) Check one.

        -- 1.       Below Rs. 3,000/-
        -- 2.       Between Rs. 3,001 - and 3,500/-
        -- 3.       Between Rs. 3,501 - and 4,000/-
        -- 4.       Between Rs. 4,001 - and 4,500/-
        -- 5.       Between Rs. 4,501 - and 5,000/-
        -- 6.       Over Rs. 5,000/-

(11)    How does your present job fit into your organization's
        structure?  (Check one)

        -- 1.       Top management.
        -- 2.       Middle management.
        -- 3.       Lower management.
        -- 4.       Others (please specify) --------------------